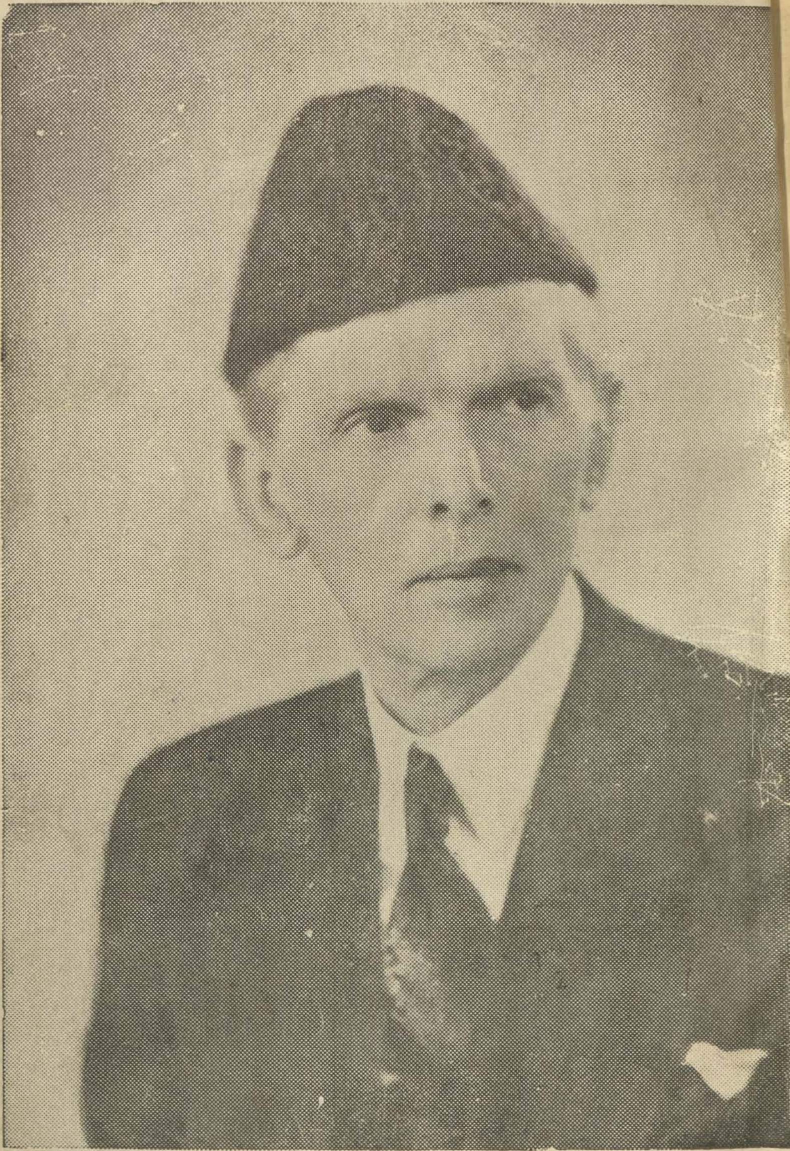


THE BELOVED OF MILLIONS

MOHAMMAD ALI JINNAH

(A POLITICAL STUDY)

by

MATLUBUL HASAN SAIYID

SHAIKH MUHAMMAD ASHRAF
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DEDICATION

To Zuleikha, my wife, who has, for the education of our little Farid, set before herself three models—Muhammad, Ali and Jinnah.

One lighted the torch of wisdom and knowledge, the other bore it with courage and personal valour and the third, in this unhappy land of ours, saved it from being extinguished.

The hope for the prayerful mother is that from these three models this little Muslim may learn his lessons how to acquire, follow and defend his principles and true ideals.

Better to be despised or too anxious apprehensions then ruined by too confident a security.

—EDMUND BURKE

Publisher's Apology

The personality, which is the subject-matter of this book, the importance of the problems coming within the compass of the following pages, richly demanded that the book, in print and get-up, should have been beyond the reach of any criticism. This would be quite consistent with the greatness and dignity of the man who is devotedly loved by millions, and respected even by his political opponents. The publisher acknowledges that the paper famine and printing difficulties created by the war have deterred him from attaining this ideal and for this he owes an apology to the reader.

The publisher further entreats the generous reader to kindly treat any flaw in printing, typography, paper, size, etc., with indulgence and forgiveness.

FOREWORD

The words 'biography' and its Urdu equivalent سوانح عمری really and strictly mean a *detailed account* of the life and career of a man, but in practice the term 'biography' includes all kinds of accounts of a man's life. Biographies have always been an important section or department of literature for the reason that the account of the life of a notable and great man possesses an inevitable and abiding interest for men in every walk of life who live in similar conditions or circumstances because it is extremely interesting and instructive to watch the birth, growth and development of a great man and to see how he achieves, ultimately, a position of supremacy over his fellow-men, how he grapples with difficulties and overcomes adverse circumstances and forces a vast body of men to accept his standpoint about matters which affect the destinies of peoples or countries. Fundamentally, the sources of interest and inspiration are the same, whether it is the biography of a statesman or that of a general or of a conqueror or of a captain of industry or finance—the subject of a true biography must be a great man in the real sense of the term. There are two ways of writing a biography: the biographer may choose to give an exhaustive account of the subject of the biography and overload it with the most minute details and trivial and significant facts of his life and attempt to

record every utterance of his. Well-known examples of this kind of biography are Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, and Lockhart's *Life of Scott*. An example of short biography may be mentioned Plutarch's *Lives*. The celebrated French writer Voltaire says in his *Life of Moliere* :

" The predilection of many readers for the frivolous, and the desire to make up a volume out of what ought to fill only pages, are the reasons why the biographies of celebrated men are nearly always ruined by the inclusion of useless details and popular fairy-tales, as false as they are insipid."

The writer of the present *Life of Jinnah* is to be congratulated for the admirable manner in which he has done his work. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the Qaid-i-Azam of the Muslims of India, represents today the hopes, aspirations and ideals of the Muslims of India who have unbounded faith in his leadership and his ability to guide the great Muslim nation of India along the path of progress and success. At the present moment there is great need for a sober, well-balanced and accurate biography of this great leader of Indian Muslims whose words and actions are, at present time, consciously and unconsciously, misunderstood and misrepresented by those who do not want that Indian Muslims should have their just and proper share in the government of this country to which

they have as much right as any other community or nation in India. In the present *Life of Jinnah* its writer has not committed the mistake of idolising his subject (as has been done in some cases which it is not necessary to mention here). Not much space has been devoted to a detailed account of the career of Jinnah. We have been told just what is necessary for us to know about the early life of Jinnah—we see a young man, belonging to a middle-class family, who gave early proof of the strength of his character and his unshaken faith in his own abilities and powers. When Sir Charles Ollivant, the then Member in charge of the Judicial Department of the Government of Bombay, pressed young Jinnah to accept a government post the salary of which would ultimately be Rs. 1,500 per month, the intrepid and independent young man "with the usual smile on his face. . .thankfully declined saying that his ultimate ambition was to earn Rs. 1,500 a day." And he made good his word, for he rose very high in his profession. Many years later when he was asked about the secret of his success he replied :

"Character, courage, industry and perseverance are the four pillars on which the whole edifice of human life can be built, and failure is a word unknown to me."

The present *Life of Jinnah* is of very great value because in tracing Jinnah's political

career, the writer has given an extremely valuable survey of political events and movements in India during modern times. The background of political history against which Mr. Jinnah's own political career has been placed, is given in such a masterly manner that the reader of this book will find here every important fact about the rise and development of the Congress and the Muslim League, and the political and constitutional development of India during the past and present generations. One of the reasons, perhaps the main reason, why Jinnah is frequently attacked by the so-called Nationalist press of India is the fact that in the beginning he was an ardent and staunch Congressman, and now he is supposed to be its most implacable and dangerous opponent. This book makes it quite clear that Jinnah is not a turncoat or time-server, and he does not believe in creating or maintaining differences between Hindus and Muslims in order to perpetuate British rule in India. Any one who reads this book will admit that Jinnah has always tried to achieve Hindu-Muslim unity and that he has been ever fearless in advocating the freedom of India and justice to Indians at home and abroad. The passage quoted in this book from Shahani's biography of Gokhale shows the courage of young Jinnah when he spoke fearlessly in the Council about " the feelings of all classes in this country (roused) to the highest pitch of indignation and horror at the

harsh and cruel treatment that is meted out to Indians in South Africa." When the President of the Council, Lord Minto, tried to browbeat Jinnah for speaking in such terms about "a friendly part of the Empire," the undaunted champion retorted that he was inclined to use "much stronger language." After the Punjab atrocities, Jinnah made passionate and brutally outspoken speeches and proclaimed that Indians could no longer abide their trust "in the Government of India or in the Government of His Majesty the King of England to represent India in matters international." Jinnah's patriotism was so much above cavil or suspicion that he was chosen as a member of the Congress delegation which went to England in 1914; at the suggestion of Mr. Lam public contributions poured in for the foundation of a Hall to mark "the great appreciation of Mr. Jinnah's services" and the famous Jinnah People's Memorial Hall was erected in Bombay; the present biographer of Jinnah rightly laments that the same Hall is being used today for discussing plans for undermining and misrepresenting that great personality—that great leader and patriot, Jinnah!

The rise and development of the Muslim League is traced in this book in a masterly manner, and it has been clearly shown that Muslims were obliged to create the League not for the sake of fighting the Hindus, but to

protect their just rights, and that communal unity was—and is—one of the main ideals of the League. Very clear account is given of the chain of events which compelled Mr. Jinnah to cut himself off from the Congress and to organise Muslims in one solid, living body fired with the zeal to establish the fact that they are a nation and that they have as much right to live in India honourably and preserve their own religion, culture and traditions as any other people ;—and it has been proved that Jinnah has always preached and practised the principle 'Live and Let Live.' No impartial reader of the present *Life of Jinnah* can for a moment believe the libel and the lie that the Muslim League is a secret servant and agent of British Imperialists, and that it is not inspired by strong and genuine desire to achieve the freedom of India. It is also shown in this book that the much-maligned demand of the Muslims for Pakistan is not an attempt to prevent the freedom of India, but rather the only means of achieving it; for, it was that great Hindu leader Lala Lajpat Rai who first suggested that " either the Muslims of India should give up their role as a separate entity or India should be divided into Hindu States and Muslim States, failing which India could never hope to become independent" The present just demand of the Muslims for Pakistan is the logical development of this suggestion which is now regarded by the Hindus as an attempt of Muslims to per-

petuate British rule in India, whereas the facts are the other way round, for Pakistan is the one and only solution of India's political problem and the only means of achieving the freedom of the country.

Not the least merit of this book is that it quotes extensively from important speeches and documents so that an impartial reader can see for himself that the conclusions which are drawn here are based upon undisputed facts.

I do not wish to make this Introduction lengthy, so I shall not refer to many other features of this admirable Life of our great National Leader. I repeat my congratulations and thank the author and publisher of this work which will be of immense value to all lovers of truth and justice, for it shows that our Qaid-i-Azam is a great patriot and that his successful efforts to awaken the Muslim community and make it a living and effective body is the surest way to achieve the freedom and salvation of India. Like Allama Iqbal, Jinnah believes that Muslims can serve their country only if they become conscious of their great destiny, become united and acquire power. Jinnah wants Muslims to become true Muslims in thought and deed, and by acquiring power show to the world how power can be used justly, how the Muslim defends and maintains the rights of others instead of trampling upon them. The clarion call of

Jinnah to the Muslims is best expressed in the words of that great Muslim nationalist poet, Iqbal:

ہر لحظہ ھے مومن کی نئی آن نئی شان
گفتار میں - کردار میں اللہ کی برھان
قہاری و غفاری و قدوسی و جبروت
یہ چار عناصر ھوں تو بنتا ھے مسلمان

سبق پھر پڑھ صداقت کا عدالت کا شجاعت کا
لیا جائیگا تجھ سے کام دنیا کی امامت کا

KHWAJA NAZIM-UD-DIN

PREFACE

"*The portraitist of a living personality must manage as best as he can without those private documents which illumine the character of his subject for future historians.*"

Emil Ludwig.

Never were two souls so widely different brought together as the subject and the author of this book—the one reaching the very clouds with the magnificent stature of his fame and glory, the other losing himself in the very depths of oblivion; the one keeping a magnanimous silence unless otherwise necessary, the other seeking to shout his life out in the service of the cause; the one leading millions with proverbial selflessness, the other proud of being one of the millions who faithfully follow; the one who has taught his people true lessons of existence, the other who has learnt his lessons well and remembers them well.

Here are, therefore, the facts of a great story of the great man, respectfully collected and humbly narrated. The author dares nor wishes

to claim an originality. He is, however, proud of one achievement, that, throughout this narrative, he has maintained a high standard of truth and morality—an achievement which, in the annals of our contemporary political literature, may justly be called rare, if not unique.

The author respectfully tenders his heartfelt acknowledgements to Mr. Hussain A. Baig Muhammad, his friend and colleague, and also to Shaikh Muhammad Ashraf, the present publisher, for their help and co-operation in making this volume see the light of the day.

Cumballa Hill,
Bombay

M. H. S.

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CHAPTER I

EARLY LIFE

On Christmas day of the year 1876, which fell on a Sunday, was born in the City of Karachi, Mohammad Ali Jinnah to gladden the hearts of his lucky parents, for he was their first-born child. His father, the late Jinnah Poonja, was a partner in a private firm, one of the biggest exporters of hides and skins, known after the name of his elder brother, Valji Poonja. The two brothers came from a mercantile Khoja family of Rajkot and had settled down in Karachi for a number of years. The house in which the family lived was located in a congested part of the city with narrow lanes and by-lanes. Supported by huge wooden pillars with broad overhanging wooden balconies and verandahs, the house was characteristic of the architecture prevalent at the time and although the original house is no more there, the general character of the locality is still maintained. Jinnah Poonja, the father of the future Muslim leader, had been from his very childhood of a tall and slim stature. He thus inherited his first name from a Gujrati word meaning lean or something to that effect, and hence it, according to the popular tradition among the Khojas, forms the surname of Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

Little Jinnah was separated from his parents at a very early stage of his life and was sent to Bombay to receive his Primary lessons at Gokul Das Tej Primary School. The effect that this early detachment from his family created on the mind of the boy partly accounts for the very prominent trait of the character of the man—the habit of stern independence and self-reliance. Perhaps it was at this time of his life that he discovered the secret of a single-handed struggle for existence, which in later years helped him so much. Of his boyhood very little is known, except that he was of a reserved nature, devoted exclusively to his studies and text-books.

After a short time, however, he was again taken back to Karachi and admitted to Sind Madrasa High School; he was put finally in the Mission High School where he passed the Matriculation Examination of the Bombay University. While still in school the young student showed such signs of brilliance that an English friend* of the family advised his father that his son should be sent to England to qualify for the Bar. Consequently, at the early age of sixteen, in the year 1892, he sailed for England, and the "tall thin boy in a funny long yellow coat," as he was humourously described by some of his fellow-students, was admitted to Lincoln's Inn.

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* Sir Frederick Croft, Bart., a famous business man of Bombay and Karachi

The author once asked him about the syllabus of studies for the Bar in England at the time. He said jokingly that it was no more difficult than to give a number of dinners, some twenty-two of them, in honour of some big members of the Inn or other lawyers of eminence. He went through the curriculum with distinction.

The period of four years, during which Jinnah stayed in England for his studies, marks a very important period of his life. India had already begun to come in the lime-light of British politics. The Government of India Act of 1892 provided for the enlargement of Indian Provincial Councils on an elective basis and so put the country on the first steps of constitutional progress. A number of Englishmen had begun to feel that India and Indians deserved better treatment. Public opinion in England was being influenced by Indian residents at the time, among whom the name of Dadabhai Naoroji, the founder and President of Indian Society in London, was the most prominent. Indian students were attracted to this Society, and the necessity of associating themselves with the Indian political struggle was being impressed upon them. It was in the midst of the electrified atmosphere, which saw the birth of a new India, that young Jinnah had reached England.

Dadabhai Naoroji was, at the time, engaged in his election to the House of Commons

from Central Finsbury, and the campaign conducted in his favour, mostly by Indian students, opened the eyes of Jinnah to the graver issues of life. The activities of young Chitta Ranjan Das, a student from Bengal, who had already made several political speeches in England, repudiating the ugly insinuation of James Maclean and supporting the candidature of Naoroji, made him think of the problems of his country. "It seems strange that Naoroji's success at the polls on this occasion was due, in no small measure, to the support which such a young admirer could give him on the one side, and, on the other, from the adventitious aid, which one of Queen Victoria's favourite Prime Ministers, the late Lord Salisbury, had unconsciously given to him, by calling him 'a black man.' Dadabhai Naoroji happened to have a whiter skin than Lord Salisbury had, and the affront was, therefore, taken not as a personal one but as an exhibition of racial arrogance. This set on edge the nerves of the electors of Central Finsbury and Naoroji easily walked into St. Stephens." *

Endowed with an enthusiastic spirit of patriotism and immense amount of energy Jinnah threw himself with the lot of others to work for the "Grand Old Man of India." Once more the merits of the young lad engaged

* P. C. Ray : *Life and Times of C. R. Das.*

the attention of those about him. Dadabhai Naoroji, already a veteran of mature years, saw with his experienced eye that this lad of seventeen, if properly influenced and guided, would go far indeed. He singled out young Jinnah there and then for roles which would have done credit to any man.

Apart from his association with public life in England, young Jinnah took a keen interest in dramatic performances as member of a Shakespearean Dramatic Club, where he also took part occasionally as an amateur actor. As a result of this unique experience, Shakespeare has always since then pervaded all his public and private utterances and writings ; and a touch of dramatic gesticulation is visible throughout his career of public speaking. In the famous letter that Mohammad Ali Jinnah wrote to Gandhi in 1940 in reply to a question raised by him as to what prefix he should use with the name of the Muslim leader, the Shakespearean allegory employed by him is well known and it is remembered to this day by the Muslim youth of India as a matter of pride. " I thank you for your anxiety to respect my wishes," wrote the President of the All-India Muslim League, " in the matter of the prefix you should use with my name. What is in a prefix after all ; a rose called by any other name smells just as sweet."*

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* *Romeo and Juliet* : Act II. Sc. 2.

Having qualified himself for the profession of Law, Mohammad Ali Jinnah returned to India in the year 1896 and was formally called to the Bar in 1897. But things were quite different now. For some time past his father had been doing none too well in business, in fact he was involved in a serious financial crisis. For the first time in his life this favourite son of fortune tasted real hardship for he was faced with sudden poverty. The struggle became harder than what he expected. He discovered that the Law Court of Karachi could not afford him opportunities which he was bound to get in a wider field where, by the diligent exercise of his talents, he could relieve his beloved father from distress. He, therefore, decided "to set out to conquer the world, equipped with nothing but his youth, his courage and his ambition."

Indeed, however, from the very first day of his arrival in India he had made himself felt among his contemporaries in Karachi, and when he announced his decision, two of his friends, who had seen in him a lawyer with a future, offered to him posts of an assistant in their own firms, already enjoying good practice, but he thankfully declined to accept the prospects of an attached career on the ground that he would like first to give his own abilities an independent test. If, however, they were keen, he requested them to keep their offers open so that if he withdrew from the venture, he could return and avail

himself of them. One of them—Walchand by name—an old school mate of Jinnah—although senior to him by two years, with a profound feeling for the spirit of the young adventurer, said he was willing to keep his offer open for ever. With all good wishes and with this little backing from a sincere friend, the young lawyer reached Bombay sometime in the year 1897.

The first three years were of great hardship and although he attended his office regularly from day to day, he wandered without a single brief. The long and crowded footpaths of Bombay may, if they could only speak, bear testimony to a young pedestrian pacing them every morning from his new abode in Golpitha*—a humble locality in the city—to his office in the Fort, which still forms the centre of all business, and every evening back again to his apartments after a weary toilsome day spent in anxious expectation. But during this period through the kind offices of an old friend he was granted leave to read in the chambers of MacPherson, then acting Advocate-General of Bombay. It was a courteous concession granted, for the first time, to an Indian, a concession hitherto unknown in the long honourable record of European leaders in the height of their success. The incident had created so much of a stir that

* A more reliable source suggests that Jinnah was living, at the time, in the Railway Hotel situated at Charni Road.

it became almost the talk of the town among fashionable circles, from Malabar Hill to Byculla Club.

In 1900 came the first opportunity. The vacany of a Presidency Magistrate had occurred in Bombay City. Desirous of expressing himself on Law and of " being heard " at last —as he himself put it—Mohammad Ali Jinnah had decided that he would apply for this post. It was, however, not so easy a preferment. He needed influence to back his claim. A strenuous endeavour was made but the required support was not forthcoming. At last gazing through the window and smoking a cigarette he wondered what remained to be done. A victoria cab was slowly passing by. An idea struck him ; he jumped into it and drove straight to the office of Sir Charles Ollivant, the then Member in charge of the Judicial Department. Jinnah sent word through the peon that waited outside the gate of Sir Charles's office, and contrary to all current traditions of officialdom, he was called in almost immediately.

"I have already heard much about you," said Sir Charles, "and it is good that you came straight to me. But, in the ordinary course, I should like to have a letter of recommendation from Mr. MacPherson, who naturally knows you more than I do." And next morning when the hesitating candidate told his senior of all the facts, MacPherson told him



As a Distinguished Lawyer

that Sir Charles had already spoken to him about it and that he would be only too glad to recommend him. "If you wanted this job, why did you not tell me before?" asked the Advocate-General as he wrote out a letter to Sir Charles Ollivant. The young man had now to explain, and when he did so saying that he had been already under so much obligation to MacPherson for the benefits he had received as a reader in his chambers and that he did not wish to worry him more with his personal matters, Jinnah made on the old man, once again, a profound impression of his extreme sense of gratitude coupled with self-respect. Thus a few lines of appreciation from an admiring superior with all due justice to the intelligence of the young candidate secured for him the coveted post and Jinnah found himself installed as a Third Presidency Magistrate for a temporary period of three months in place of P. H. Dastur who had gone on leave. The small salary so earned was enough to relieve him of the encumberances he had incurred during the last three years of his struggle and also to save a little for the future. On the expiry of these three months, a further tenure of three months presented itself to him; for Sander-Slater, Chief Presidency Magistrate, went on leave and Hoshang Dastur on his return was promoted in his place, and the term of Jinnah's office was further extended likewise.

With what ability and skill the probationer conducted the proceedings of the Court and how sound his judgments were, is evident from the fact that upon the expiry of this temporary period, on the 3rd of November, Sir Charles requested, nay entreated, Mohammad Ali Jinnah to make himself available for future, when he thought he would require him permanently on an increased scale of pay rising up to Rs. 1,500/- per month. The independence of character of the young man and his determination to achieve the ideal he had set before him would not, however, let him pause on the way, and with the usual smile on his face he thankfully declined saying that his ultimate ambition was to earn Rs. 1,500/- a day. Sir Charles Ollivant thought that the sentimental young lawyer was committing a mistake. The fact is noteworthy because even in the days of the height of his fame as an Advocate, Mohammad Ali Jinnah did not raise his professional fees to more than what he had originally fixed in mind as his remuneration.

"After two years," Jinnah once told the author, " Sir Charles returned to India having spent some time in England in quiet retirement. He was invited to the Orient Club in Bombay of which I was a member and I attended on the occasion. On seeing me there, he came over to me and enquired as to how I was doing in Law ; and when I told him I was earning more than rupees two thousand a month, he congratulated me on my

determination and courage, saying that I had done well to refuse his offer."

Mohammad Ali Jinnah had now moved to a decent flat near the present location of the Taj Mahal Hotel in Bombay and he owned a carriage which he had bought during his tenure of office in the Presidency Court. He could look back with satisfaction upon the early days when he landed in the city with only a few coins in his pocket and with nothing else but courage to face the three briefless years. The period was enough to tire out the patience of any ordinary man. What was the secret of his success? He himself once explained: " Character, courage, industry and perseverance are the four pillars on which the whole edifice of human life can be built, and failure is a word unknown to me."

CHAPTER II

ON THE PATH

Relieved from the anxiety of financial stringency Mohammad Ali Jinnah was now free to take part in public affairs. Hitherto he had kept himself abreast of all the political developments in the country more or less as a mere spectator. Now he seriously thought of contributing his mite towards the welfare of his people. He cherished the early impressions, which he had gathered in England, of Dadabhai Naoroji. He had occasions to watch the activities of great leaders of India at close quarters.

The political horizon of the country in general, and of Bombay Province in particular, had been murky with clouds of conflicting opinions. Political thinkers—Dadabhai Naoroji, Ranade, Pherozshah Mehta, Dinshaw Wacha, Telang, Badruddin Tyebji, Gokhale, W. C. Bonnerjee and others—were engaged in fighting the constitutional battles of India, while social reformers like Tilak, Bepin Pal, Lala Lajpat Rai and Syed Ahmed Khan were busy advocating the extremist views of orthodoxy and ancient revival of their respective societies. There existed, therefore, three distinct schools of thought. One, led by Dadabhai Naoroji, stood for political advancement of India through peaceful negotiations and constitutional agitation. " During

the time when the General Election of 1885 was pending," declared Pherozshah Mehta talking of a particular meeting, "the Bombay Presidency Association resolved to inaugurate the policy of carrying the war, as it were, into the enemy's country, of making a direct appeal to the British electors by means of leaflets and delegates, and of asking them to discriminate between the white sheep and the black sheep......But of all those who took part in the proceedings of that day, there was nobody who threw himself into the movement inaugurated by the Association more earnestly or more vigorously than Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji ......It was he who moved the principal resolution at the meeting, and struck the keynote of the situation by emphatically laying down that 'it is in Parliament our chief battles have to be fought.' To this he soon came to add another article of faith to his political creed, in favour of which I had ventured to raise my solitary voice, at the meeting. It was that not only our chief battles had to be fought in Parliament but that those battles could never be really and truly fought until Indian questions were brought within the sphere of party politics."* The above quotation throws no little light as to what was the method of approach

*Extract from the speech made at the public meeting held in the Town Hall, on Saturday, the 23rd July 1892, under the auspices of the Bombay Presidency Association, to commemorate the election of Dadabhai Naoroji as a Member of Parliament, with Sir Dinshaw Petit, Bart., as chairman.

" England," he said again, " must raise India to her own level or India will drag her down to hers."

During the same session of the Congress, Gokhale, speaking on a resolution for the Reduction of Salt Duty, said : " We are appealing to the sense of justice of the Government of India. We are appealing to their statesmanship, to their righteousness, and I will even go further and say, to their mercy." The above utterances of two great Indians are clearly indicative of the policy and programme they had set before themselves, and one sees them rising in the public estimation of their day as untiring workers for the amelioration of the peoples of India. Their invaluable services through the Bombay Corporation and the Bombay University, through the Bombay Legislative Council and the Supreme Legislative Council in the Centre, are remembered by all even to this day.

Simultaneously, some silent influences were also at work. Public-spirited men whose position in life would not allow them to devote all their time to the burning questions of the day were, nevertheless, contributing their rightful share by casting their wholesome shadows on the minds of the more active workers. They were indeed a source of inspiration and encouragement. To this class of our political patriarchs belonged the late lamented Ranade, who by his constant vigilance kept the current

of public fervour within control, and directed the energies of many a young man of his time in the right channels. It was he who shaped the mind of Gokhale and put him on the right track. " His patriotism was of a sure, fervent and profound character and his one aspiration through life was that India should be roused from the lethargy of centuries, so that she might become a great and living nation, responsive to truth and justice, and self-respect, responsive to all the claims of our higher nature, animated by lofty ideals, and undertaking great national tasks. And he had come to recognise that the present contact between India and England was a providential arrangement in order that this aspiration might be realised. His conviction on this point never wavered whatever happened. Even in his attachment to the cause of social and religious reform, patriotism was the strongest current ; for he believed that without this reform there was no hope for us as a nation Ceaseless toil on the part of every worker he preached but better exemplified in his own remorseless devotion to work. Apathy, he always said, was our greatest curse in these days."

" In his optimism he was never shaken. The coldest reception given by the Government to the memorials submitted through his industry was by him interpreted as something quite cheering. Thus when Gokhale himself, in his early days, would despondently complain : 'What is the good of taking all this

trouble and submitting these memorials, if Government don't care to say anything more than that they have noted the contents of our letter?' Mr. Ranade's reply was characteristic: 'You don't realise our place in the history of our country. These memorials are nominally addressed to Government, in reality they are addressed to the people, so that they may learn how to think in these matters. This work must be done for many years without expecting any other result, because politics of this kind is altogether new in this land. Besides, if Government note the contents of what we say, even that is something."*

It was really service that mattered, no matter in what domain of activity. Such were our leaders at the time. They knew that they could not achieve anything substantial during their life-time, but they had the satisfaction of laying the foundations of a great future. They toiled and laboured for the mere love of it, and for being able to impart that essential education to their people which is necessary for every nation on the path of progress.

Was Tilak doing service to India in his own way? As delegate to the Bombay session of the Indian National Congress in 1889, he declared: "Freedom is my birth-right and I shall have it." Still he had the spirit of a sweeping Hindu revivalist. He was opposed to the

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*T. K. Shahani: *Gopal Krishna Gokhale.*

attitude of begging favours from the British. He visualised an object before him and if force were needed to achieve it he would not mind to employ it freely. He had to organise popular belief in his favour and he knew that the Hindu religious approach could do the trick for him. He was sure that the oriental mind would more readily grasp the ideas expressed with a religious sanctity. He was aware that he could win the hearts of his people by a studious appeal to their sentiment through the narration of historical anecdotes by giving them a national tinge. He had expected that his doing so would completely alienate sympathies of his Muslim countrymen. But he could not help there. Tilak believed that Hindus had suffered as much at the hands of the Muslims, as they had under the British rule. He had the courage to stand by his conviction and did not mince matters. Through his two journals, *Maratha*, printed in English, and *Kesari*, printed in Marathi, he was inciting his followers and Maharashtrian countrymen against both, the Britishers and the Musalmans. In 1893 he organised the first public festival in honour of Ganpati, the elephant-headed god known to every village in India, and thus founded a permanent institution in opposition to the Muslim Muharram festival. The same year he founded the Anti-Cow Killing Society, and demanded, at a meeting of the Saravajanik Sabha, from the Government the lifting of the ban on playing of music by

Hindu processions in front of mosques. As a result the Muslim members of the Sabha resigned but Tilak gained immeasurable popularity among the Hindus.

Further to consolidate Maratha sentiment and activity, Tilak determined to revive the worship of the greatest of all Maratha heroes, Shivaji, the founder of the Maratha power. In 1895 he organised and presided over the first great Shivaji festival at Raigarh, Shivaji's first capital. There was recited by one of Tilak's followers a poem written specially for the occasion, the sense of which was as follows:

'*Let us be prompt like Shivaji to engage in desperate enterprises. Take up your swords and shields and we shall cut off countless heads of enemies. Listen, though we shall have to risk our lives in a national war, we shall assuredly shed the life-blood of our enemies.*'

There also Tilak himself spoke. In Shivaji's life there has been one incident—the killing, with the notorious tiger's claw, of Afzal Khan, the opposing General with whom he was in peace conference—which laid him open to the charge of treachery. Tilak's way of treating this incident was highly significant. "It is needless to make further researches into the killing of Afzal Khan. Let us even assume that Shivaji deliberately planned and executed the murder. Did Shivaji commit a sin in killing Afzal

Khan? The answer to this question can be found in *Mahabharat* itself. The divine Krishna teaching in the *Gita* tells us we may kill even our teachers and our kinsmen, and no blame attaches if we were not actuated by selfish desires .. God has conferred on the foreigners no grant of Hindustan inscribed on imperishable brass. Shivaji strove to drive them forth out of the land of his birth but he was guiltless of the sin of covetousness. Do not circumscribe your vision like frogs in a well. Rise above the Penal Code into the rarefied atmosphere of the sacred *Bhagwad Gita* and consider the actions of great men."*

There could be no truer indication of the policy towards which Tilak was leading his men. His influence was rising day by day; and by the year 1897 he had acquired the status of a hero and earned the title of *Lokmania*, the beloved of the people.

The purpose of this apparent digression is not to consider the effect that the policy of Tilak had on the general political outlook of India, but to indicate how far the current political atmosphere of the Bombay Presidency must have influenced Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Fresh from England and having imbibed in him the political principles of English administration, coming in contact with sober-minded leaders, like Dadabhai Naoroji, Pherozshah

*Home Library Club: *Great Men of India.*

Mehta, Gokhale and Ranade and having been for some time in their company, and above all interested in the larger issues that faced the country at the time, Jinnah could not under the circumstances vie with leaders of extreme views like Tilak. He, therefore, in the natural course of events allied himself with people belonging to what is now generally known as the " moderate school of thought."

CHAPTER III

IN THE MAKING

The establishment in the year 1885 of the Indian National Congress marks the inauguration of the pursuit in India of the parliamentary system on the lines of Western Democracy. Although the establishment of the High Courts and Legislative Councils in India between the years 1861 and 1863 had provided scope to the Indian peoples to express themselves, there was still felt a necessity for an organisation of an All-India character which would be competent to elicit and voice the public will.

"Mr. A. O. Hume, C.B., had in 1884 conceived the idea that it would be of great advantage to the country if leading Indian politicians could be brought together once a year to discuss social matters and be upon friendly footing with one another. He did not desire that politics should form part of their discussion, for there were recognised political bodies in Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and other parts of India and he thought that these bodies might suffer in importance if, when Indian politicians came together, they discussed politics. His idea, further, was that the Governor of the Province where the politicians met should be asked to preside over

their deliberations, and that thereby great cordiality should be established between the official classes and the non-official Indian politicians. Full of these ideas he saw the noble Marquis when he went to Simla early in 1885, after Lord Dufferin had in December previous assumed the Viceroyalty of India. Lord Dufferin took great interest in the matter and after considering over it for some time he sent for Mr. Hume and told him that, in his opinion, Mr. Hume's project would not be of much use. He said there was no body of persons in this country who performed the functions which Her Majesty's Opposition did in England. The newspapers, even if they really represented the views of the people, were not reliable and as the English were necessarily ignorant of what was thought of them and their policy in native circles, it would be very desirable in their interests as well as the interests of the rulers that Indian politicians should meet yearly and point out to the Government in what respect the administration was defective and how it could be improved, and he asked that an assembly such as he proposed should not be presided over by the local Governor, for in his presence the people might not like to speak out their minds."*

The policy of the Congress, thus founded, was, therefore, naturally that of loyalty to the Crown, and the resolutions adopted therein were nothing more than mere submissions

*W. C. Bonnerjea: *Introduction to Indian Politics.*

from the ruled to the rulers. Its leaders emphatically declared that they were out and out loyalists, and at the session of the Congress in 1885, its first President, W. C. Bonnerjea, assured every one, " that there were no more thoroughly loyal and consistent well-wishers of the British Government than were himself and the friends around him. In meeting to discuss, in an orderly and peaceable manner, questions of vital importance affecting their well-being, they were following the only course by which the Constitution of England enabled them to represent their views to the ruling authority. Much had been done by Great Britain for the benefit of India, and the whole country was truly grateful to her for it. She had given them order, she had given them Railways and above all she had given them the inestimable blessing of Western Education. But a great deal still remained to be done. The more progress the people made in education and material prosperity the greater would be the insight into political matters and the keener their desire for political advancement. He thought that their desire to be governed according to the ideas of government prevalent in Europe was in no way incompatible with their thorough loyalty to the British Government. All that they desired was that the basis of the government should be widened and that the people should have their proper and legitimate share in it. The discussions that would take place in this Con-

gress would, he believed, be as advantageous to the ruling authorities as, he was sure, it would be to the people at large."*

Dadabhai Naoroji, the next President of the Congress, spoke thus : "Let us speak out like men and proclaim that we are loyal to the backbone, that we understand the benefits the English rule has conferred upon us ; that we thoroughly appreciate the education that has been given to us, the new light which has been poured upon us, turning us from darkness into light and teaching us the new lesson that the kings are made for the people, not people for the kings, and this new lesson we have learned amidst the darkness of Asiatic despotism only by the light of free English civilisation."

The address of Badruddin Tyebji, delivered in Madras during the third session of the Congress, strikes a clearer note as to what policy this august body was to follow, "No, gentlemen," said he, "let our opponents say what they please ; we the educated natives by the mere force of our education, must be the best appreciators of the blessings of a civilised and enlightened Government and, therefore, in our own interests, the best and staunch supporters of the British Government in India." He added, "Be moderate in your demands, be just in your criticisms, be accu-

* G. A. Natesan & Co : *Indian National Congress.*

rate in your facts, be logical in your conclusions and you may rest assured that any propositions that you make to our rulers will be received with that benign consideration which is the characteristic of a strong and enlightened government."

This expression of appreciation and gratefulness and profession of fidelity and submission went on as usual for a number of years, and although the Presidents and the venue of the Indian National Congress changed from year to year, its outlook remained practically the same. In 1890, Pherozshah Mehta, President-elect of that year, spoke thus in Bombay: "The question of our loyalty is set at rest for ever. In the debate on Lord Cross's India Reform Bill in the House of Lords, Viceroy after Viceroy bore emphatic testimony to the loyal and peaceful character of our aims and efforts. Within the last few days the voice of no less a personage than one of our former Secretaries of State has confirmed this testimony. Lord Randolph Churchill—it is no less distinguished a public man that I refer—has publicly declared that 'he could sincerely remark that no one will rejoice more than himself if the deliberations of the Indian National Congress shortly to be resumed were to contribute effectually to the progress and the welfare of the Indian people'."

At the same time, however, the clear note of mixed hopes and fears gives a clue to

the stages through which the Congress was passing at the time. "But, however arduous and however provoking some of the experiences of the trial," said he, "through which we have passed, they should not leave any trace behind. For let us not imagine that they were devoid of chastening and beneficial effects upon ourselves. Let us frankly acknowledge that they also must have had their share in contributing to add clearness to our thoughts, sobriety to our methods, and moderation to our proposals. If I might use a prescribed, but not unscriptural, phrase we must give even the devil his due. It is on the third stage—the era of achievement that we have now entered. It is true that a majority of the Congress proposals do not still seem to have made much headway. Even as regards the proposal to separate the Executive and the Judicial functions, lauded by Lord Dufferin 'as a counsel of perfection to which the Government were ready to subscribe,' Government are yet so absorbed in admiration of it that they have not recovered themselves sufficiently to take action. There is, however, no reason to despair. It was once proved upon the sworn testimony of the Bombay High Court, before the late Chief Justice Sir Westropp, that a woman required twenty-two months for parturition in the air of the province of Kathiawar. It is not impossible, gentlemen, that the air of Simla may similarly necessitate a more than ordinarily long period of gestation to

perfect even counsels of perfection ; and therefore we must possess our souls in more than ordinary patience, lest any precipitate pressure might occasion a miscarriage."

The progress thus set afoot resolved itself in later years sometimes into bitter criticisms of the attitude of apathy which the British officials born in India and Britain manifested towards the local conditions, and sometimes into vigorous demands of political and educational reforms, of better laws, of better government, of more responsibility, of better administration of justice and of the separation of Judiciary from the Executive. The deliberations of the Congress centred mostly on technical lines and its hitherto vague criticisms were gradually becoming precise. A growing desire, however, of self-assertion was observable as early as 1893 when Dadabhai Naoroji after having profusely quoted from British statesmen to the effect that the retention of Eastern Empire was 'essential to the greatness and prosperity of the United Kingdom,' asked the question : "With all such deep, vast and great interests and the greatness and prosperity of the United Kingdom, essentially depending on the Eastern Empire, and indissolubly bound up with it, is it reasonable, is it just and fair, is it 'British' that all the cost of such greatness, glory and prosperity of the United Kingdom should be entirely, to the last farthing, thrown upon the wretched Indians, as if the only relation existing between

the United Kingdom and India were not of mutual benefit but of mere masters and slaves as Macaulay pointed out to be deprecated ?" And in the course of the same speech, Dadabhai Naoroji drew the attention of his audience : "But mark the words of Lord Cross, 'I am certain that in the course of a few years the Indian people will force us to do them justice.' This is just the feature—to be forced to do justice—which I always deplore. We desire that all necessary reforms and acts of justice should be spontaneous on the part of Britain, in good grace and in good time as gifts claiming our gratitude, and not to wait till *forced*, with loss of grace from the giver and loss of gratitude from the receiver."

In the ensuing years, the Congress met with a steady progress, and Indian public asserted itself more and more. That, during this period, under the able guidance of the moderate statesmen, India did gain much can not be denied. To a student of contemporary politics, it is obvious that in spite of the Congress indulging in severe criticism of the British policy and administration in India, there existed cordial relations between the rulers and the ruled both in this country and in Great Britain. Sir Charles Elliot, speaking from his place as the President of the Bengal Legislative Council, expressed the valuable sentiment : "I am quite satisfied in my own mind that the extension of the Executive Council has materially added to its strength,

and to its popularity and to its power of doing good for the country. Of the Hon'ble members present there are, I think, three whose term of office will come to an end before we meet next time and who may be re-elected or who may not. If they are re-elected we shall welcome them back; if not, we hope we shall find in their successors, colleagues who are as generous and as zealous as they have been." The official correspondent on Indian affairs wrote in the *Times*, London, as follows: "The questions asked in the Supreme and Provincial Legislatures during the past two years cover the whole area of Indian administration and of the economic interest of the peoples. With scarcely an exception they have tended to a better understanding between the rulers and the ruled; and in important instances they have furnished a valuable opportunity of placing the actual facts before the public."

W.S. Caine, a friend of India and Member of Parliament, expressing his inability to attend the Congress session of the year 1899 held at Lucknow wrote to R. C. Dutt, President, that "my love to the Indian people, my belief in their future as a great governing portion of the British Empire, and my conviction of their mutual capacity for self-government deepens and strengthens every year. I trust that God may inspire and direct your counsels and bring them to early fruition." And Sir Henry Cotton in the course of his Presidential Address delivered at the session of the Congress

in 1904 at Bombay urged upon the Indians to take heart and not be daunted by a few of the opponents : "I have seen signs among you of depression, and have noticed a tendency to submit with resignation to the policy of a regime which affords no encouragement to your aspirations. I am not surprised at these symptoms, but assuredly you have little cause for giving way to a sense of despondency. It is not reserved to any human agency to set back the dial of time. The result of reaction is always to galvanise into fresh life. Be vigilant therefore ; be hopeful ; be of good cheer and of a gladsome countenance. Relax not your efforts, for the waves of progress are irresistibly dashing against the breakwater of prejudice, and even now the day is dawning which Macaulay declared would be the proudest day of English history." The friendly relations between the Indians and the Britishers tended towards the creation of an atmosphere of give and take, which was so essential at the time for the entire satisfaction of the parties concerned.

But the Congress was now entering a new phase of life. The year 1905 saw, under the leadership of Gopal Krishn Gokhale, the friend and model of Jinnah, the most emphatic protest against the Partition of Bengal, a measure sponsored and effected by Lord Curzon, then Viceroy of India. For the first time in the history of the Congress, its politics took

the shape of negative agitation. Gokhale addressing the Congress advanced the argument: "Gentlemen, I have carefully gone through all the papers which have been published by the Government on this subject of Partition. Three things have struck me forcibly—determination to dismember Bengal at all costs, an anxiety to promote the interests of Assam at the expense of Bengal, and a desire to suit everything to the interests and convenience of the Civil Service." He quoted from the statement of the Government of India issued in connection with the Bengal question the following extract: "It cannot be for the lasting good of any country or any people that public opinion or what passes for it should be manufactured by a comparatively small number of people at a single centre and should be disseminated thence for universal adoption, all other views being discouraged and suppressed....From every point of view, it appears to us desirable to encourage the growth of centres of independent opinion, local aspiration, local ideals and to preserve the growing intelligence and enterprise of Bengal from being cramped and stunted by the process of forcing it prematurely into a mould of rigid and sterile uniformity." Gokhale continued: "After this let no apologist of the late Viceroy pretend that the object of the partition was administrative convenience and not political repression."

And at another place he said: "Gentlemen, as I have already observed, the manner

in which the Partition of Bengal has been carried out furnishes a striking illustration of the worst features of the present system of bureaucratic rule. Happily these features are not always so conspicuously in evidence. No one also denies that a large proportion of the members of the bureaucracy bring to their work a high level of ability, a keen sense of duty and a conscientious desire, within the limit of restricted opportunities permitted by the predominance of other interests, to do what good they can do the people. It is the system that is really at fault—a system which relegates the interests of the people to a very subordinate place and which, by putting too much power into the hands of these men, impairs their sense of responsibility and develops in them a spirit of intolerance of criticism."

The vigour of the movement had bewildered British statesmen and authorities in India as well as outside were restless after having discovered the great strength the Congress had come to acquire. A few British friends still had great sympathies with Indian aspirations, but after the launching of the Bengal agitation a good many of them had lost all hope. It was felt that the movement had slipped out of the hands of the "sober-minded" leaders and had developed into a fanatic and sentimental ferment which had for its result nothing but a dark future.

The Indian leaders were, however, thinking in quite different terms. Bengal agitation

was only a means for the organisation of a popular will essential to the attainment of the final end—the establishment of self-government, equal in status with other members of the Empire, the Dominions. Gokhale expressed the desire: "Gentlemen, this is the twenty-first session of the Indian National Congress. Year after year, since 1885, we have been assembling in these gatherings to give voice to our aspirations and to formulate our wants. When the movement was first inaugurated, we were under the influence of that remarkable outburst of enthusiasm for British rule which had been evoked in the country by the great Viceroyalty of the Marquis of Ripon. The best-beloved of India's Viceroys was not content to offer mere lip-homage to the principle that righteousness alone exalteth a nation. He had dared to act on it in practice and he had braved persecution at the hands of his own countrymen in India for its sake. Lord Ripon's noblest service to this country was that he greatly quickened the processes by which the consciousness of a national purpose comes to establish itself in the minds of a people. The Congress movement was the direct and immediate outcome of this realisation. It was started to focus and organise the patriotic forces that were working independently of one another in different parts of the country, so as to invest their work with a national character and to increase their general effectiveness. Hope at that time was

warm and faith shone bright largely as a result of Lord Ripon's Viceroyalty, and those who started the Congress believed that by offering their criticism and urging their demands from a national platform, where they could speak in the name of all India, they would be able to secure a continuous improvement of the administration of a steady advance in the direction of the political emancipation of the people. Twenty years have since elapsed and during the time much has happened to chill that hope and dim that faith, but there can be no doubt that work of great value in our national life has already been accomplished. The minds of the people have been familiarised with the idea of a united India working for her salvation; a national public opinion has been created; close bonds of sympathy now knit together the different provinces; caste and creeds, separations hamper less and less the pursuit of common aims; dignity of a consciousness of national existence has spread over the whole land. Our record of political concessions won is, no doubt, very meagre, but those that have been secured are of considerable value; some retrogressions have been prevented; and if laterly we have been unable to stem the tide of reaction, the resistance we have offered, though it has failed of its avowed purpose, has substantially strengthened our public life. Our deliberations have extended over a very wide range of problems; public opinion in the country is, in consequence, better informed and the Press

is steadily growing in authority and usefulness. Above all, there is general perception now of the goal towards which we have to strive and a wide recognition of the arduous character of the struggle and the immense sacrifices it requires. The goal of the Congress is that India should be governed in the interests of the Indians themselves, and that in course of time a form of government should be attained in this country similar to what exists in the self-governing colonies of the British Empire."

Thus had Gokhale shaped the political future of India as early as 1905, and although a formal demand for self-government was not made until the next session of the Congress, the broad principles on which the political policy of the Congress had to be formulated had already been laid down. Nor did he fail to suggest as to how that goal was to be achieved. Jinnah was still a student and a spectator. In the words of T.K. Shahani, Gokhale's biographer, the moderation and reasonableness of Gokhale's thought and speech even on occasions permitting a legitimate rousing of popular feeling stands out in admirable relief. Ranade's lesson that the utmost care should be taken to safely pilot the roused masses was never for once even lost sight of. This indeed provided the channel into which Gokhale's thought and energy were directed. " For

better, for worse," he once said, " our destinies are now linked with those of England and the Congress freely recognises that whatever advance we seek must be within the Empire itself. That advance, moreover, can only be gradual, as at each stage of the progress it may be necessary for us to pass through a brief course of apprenticeship before we are enabled to go to the next one ; for it is reasonable proposition that the sense of responsibility, required for the proper exercise of the political institutions of the West, can be acquired by an Eastern people through practical training and experiment only... While, therefore, we are prepared to allow that an advance towards our goal may be only by reasonably cautious steps what we emphatically insist on is that the resources of the country should be primarily devoted to the work of qualifying the people by means of education and in other ways, for such advance.

Through education, practical training and experiment, therefore, in Gokhale's opinion, lay the salvation of the Indian people, which principle he never failed to advocate. The practical contribution that he personally made in pursuance of his policy and the support that he lent to the various educational and social movements, at the sacrifice of his own personal interests, were enough to rouse and inspire any man. Gokhale's innumerable

qualities manifesting themselves in the service of India attracted Mohammad Ali Jinnah towards this great man, and once in a 'priceless moment of self-revelation' he confessed that it was his ambition to become the Muslim Gokhale.*

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*Mrs. Sarojini Naidu : *Ambassador of Unity.*

CHAPTER IV

OUT OF THE TUMULT

" All our sufferings and evils of the past centuries demand before God and men reparation. which we may fairly expect from the present revival of the old noble British instincts of liberty and self-government...The British people would not allow themselves to be subjected for a single day to such an unnatural system of government as the one which has been imposed upon India for nearly a century and a half...And now the next question is: What are the British rights which we have a right to claim? This is not the occasion to enter into any detail or argument. I keep to broad lines. (This was Dadabhai Naoroji a king).

" (1) Just as the administration of the United Kingdom in all services, departments, and details is in the hands of the people themselves of that country, so should we in India claim that the administration in all services, departments, and details should be in the hands of the people themselves of India. This is not only a matter of right and matter of the aspirations of the educated—important enough as these matters are—but it is far more an absolute necessity as the only remedy for the great inevitable economic evil which Sir

John Shore pointed out a hundred and twenty years ago, and which is the fundamental cause of the present drain and poverty. The remedy is absolutely necessary for the material, moral, intellectual, political, social, industrial and every possible progress and welfare of the people of India.

"(2) As, in the United Kingdom and the Colonies, all taxation and legislation and the power of spending the taxes are in the hands of the representatives of the people of those countries, so should also be the rights of the people of India.

"(3) All financial relations between England and India must be just and on footing of equality—*i.e.*, whatever money India may find towards expenditure in any department, civil or military or naval, to the extent of that share should Indians share in all the benefits of that expenditure in salaries, pensions, emoluments, materials, etc., as a partner in the Empire, as she is always declared to be. We do not ask any favours. We only want justice. Instead of going into any further divisions or details of our right as British citizens, the whole matter can be comprised in one word—'Self-government,' or 'Swaraj,' like that of the United Kingdom or the Colonies."

With these words Dadabhai Naoroji enunciated the glorious ideal of *swaraj*, during

the course of his Presidential Address delivered at the Congress session in 1906. For India also, he declared, there could be no national greatness, strength and hope except by the right political principles of self-government. But how was this end to be achieved?

In the opinion of Dadabhai Naoroji what was wanted at the time was knowledge of the lesson from Englishmen themselves—to agitate most earnestly and most perseveringly, by petitions, demonstrations, and meetings; all quite peacefully but enthusiastically conducted. Agitation was the life and soul of the whole political, social and industrial history of England. It was by agitation the English had accomplished their most glorious achievements, their prosperity, their liberties and, in short, their first place among the nations of the world. It was the age of Victorian liberation. The whole life of England, every day, was all agitation. They did not open their papers in the morning but to read from beginning to end that it was all agitation—Congress and conferences, meetings and resolutions—without end for a thousand and one movements local and national. From the Prime Minister down to the humblest politician the occupation looked like agitation for everything he wanted to accomplish. The whole Parliament, press and platform gave a picture of agitation. Agitation was the civilised, peaceful weapon of moral

force, and infinitely preferable to brute physical force when possible. The subject was very tempting. But, he said, he should not say more than that the "Indian journalists were mere matriculates while the Anglo-Indian journalists were Masters of Arts in the University of British Agitators." The former were only the pupils of the latter, and the Anglo-Indian journalists ought to have felt proud that their pupils were doing credit to them. Perhaps a few words from an English statesman would be more satisfactory. Macaulay had said in one of his speeches, "I hold that we have owed to agitation a long series of beneficent reforms which would have been effected in no other way....The truth is that agitation is inseparable from popular government...Would the slave trade ever have been abolished without agitation? Would slavery ever have been abolished without agitation?" For every movement in England—hundreds, local and national—the chief weapons, said Naoroji, were agitation by meetings, demonstrations and petitions to Parliament.

In this memorable session of the Congress, held in Calcutta, was present Mohammad Ali Jinnah, known to be acting as Private Secretary to Dadabhai Naoroji. He was already reckoned as rising lawyer and a coming politician. For, true to his early teaching, and fired no doubt by the

virile patriotism of men like the lion-hearted Pherozshah Mehta and the indomitable Gokhale, he had long already joined the ranks of the National Congress and regularly attended its annual gatherings. Incidentally, it is interesting to note that his maiden speech at this National Assembly was made in connection with "Wakf-alal-Aulad" —a measure that was later to bring his name into such prominence.*

The twenty-second National Congress dispersed amidst scenes of the wildest enthusiasm and rejoicings. A vote of thanks to the President was proposed by Lal Mohan Ghose, and he was loaded with garlands of flowers amid thunders of applause. A swadeshi umbrella from Poona was unfurled and held over him for a moment, and then he said few words of thanks. He reminded them that, in its twenty-second session, the Congress had placed before itself a definite goal—Self-government, or 'Swaraj.' Now it was for the younger generation to reach it.

The younger generation did strive to reach it. Events were to prove beyond doubt that Congress politics had passed out of the hands of the older stock of leaders. In fact the twenty-second session

*Mrs. Sarojini Naidu : *Ambassador of Unity.*

of the Congress was a great triumph for the Extremists. Writing about the undercurrents of Indian politics the correspondent of the *Times of India*, in its issue of the 3rd of January 1906, wrote as follows:

"For several years past it has been clear to careful observers that within the Congress a party was being slowly evolved which was inimical to its successful working as a constitutional movement. For years past this party has been striving hard to capture the Congress and make it a vehicle of its own propaganda. The late Mr. Ranade, while he lived, was a formidable obstacle to this party, and its first attempt was accordingly directed against him when in 1895, at Poona, the demand was made for the first time in the history of the movement that the Social Conference should not be held in the Congress Pavilion. The next phase of this party was to ask that the Congress should be provided with a constitution. The older and more responsible leaders realised that in the present state of public indifference the only result of giving such a constitution would be to hand over the movement to the turbulent spirits within its fold. Sir Pherozshah Mehta has incurred the implacable hostility of this section by steadily throwing his influence against their attempts. This

year they counted on the differences created between Bengal and Bombay on account of the Boycott movement—the latter holding that it was perfectly ridiculous to overthrow the influence of the sober heads of the Congress, and to instal themselves in their place. But the event has shown that the party carried no weight whatever outside its immediate circle. The first resolution proposed to be taken at the Congress was one welcoming their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales. When the matter was brought up in the Subjects Committee, Messrs. Lajpat Rai and Tilak strongly opposed it. Madras, Bombay and United Provinces were solidly in favour of it, and even Bengal refrained from joining hands withthe dissentients."

As soon as the above article appeared in the Bombay paper, vituperations from the local press, of which vernacular papers were most vocal, started pouring upon its correspon dent. Vilifications and misrepresentations were the order of the day. Abuse was flung on opponents and Anglo-Indians. Old friends were disowned and distrust prevailed. But facts stood as facts as is evident from the letter of one Maneckji Kawasji Patel published in the same paper on the 26th January, 1906 :

" Sir, I honestly feel that great injustice is being done to the correspondent,

who, in a recent issue of your paper, said that Messrs. Tilak and Lajpat Rai had opposed in the Subjects Committee the resolution to welcome the Prince. The said statement of your correspondent has been vehemently called into question by the *Maratha* and the *Indu Prakash*. Now, sir, as I was present in both the meetings of the Subjects Committee and had listened to the speeches with the greatest attention, and could testify to the truth of the statement made by your correspondent, I wonder why men who call themselves patriots and express their views most emphatically in the meetings of the Subjects Committee are afraid to come forward and own the attitude taken to shield them by putting forth false versions of the matter. Without being guilty of betraying any Congress secret, I may say that the resolution in question was most strongly opposed by Messrs. Lajpat Rai and Tilak much to the disgust of sober-minded members of the Subjects Committee."

Contrary to the advice of the Congress at Benares, however, the Extremists did not fail to start the much-debated Boycott movement in Bengal, and when in December 1906 the national assembly met in Calcutta, it was in full swing. By that time also they had

acquired considerable strength within the ranks of the organisation. In the midst of the atmosphere, therefore, created for the Congress in Bengal the Moderates found themselves completely helpless and Extremists' demand that Boycott should be made the official policy of the Congress could not be resisted. Ambika Charan Mozumdar moved the resolution, "that having regard to the fact that the people of this country have little or no voice in its administration, and that their representations do not receive due consideration, this Congress is of opinion that the Boycott Movement inaugurated in Bengal by way of protest against the partition of that province was and is legitimate." Bepin Chandra Pal seconded it in a vigorous speech and said that it was not a mere boycott of goods but one of honorary offices and associations with the government in East Bengal. Not one leader of the people would associate with the Lieutenant-Governor in any legislative work. The elders, dumbfound, however, declared that "they were not bound by individual speeches."

For the first time in the history of the Congress reason fell in its fight with sentiment, and frenzy and fanaticism blinded the intelligence. For the first time the East unlearnt the lesson taught to it through the ages that it had to deal with the West. A bid for power ensued and National Congress became a house divided within itself,

and already not national in character ceased to be national in its outlook. In the words of Mrs. Annie Besant, "the strongest and farthest-sighted men were to hold their o d ideals of constitutional work and steady progress. Others, maddened by the repressive measures adopted, were to cause a partition worse than that of Lord Curzon, a division of the National Party, one part holding to the group that refused to despair of appealing to the House of Commons, and the other which became frankly antagonistic to all co-operation with the British Government. And beyond these loomed up the Anarchist Party with the bomb and revolver for its methods, the incarnation of blind hatred, without constructive policy, the mad efforts of lads, dreaming of winning liberty for their country, and succeeding only in committing a few useless crimes. In the scales of History shall all these be weighed,—Government, Moderates, Extremists, Anarchists, and to each shall be assigned their own place."

The events described in the foregoing pages had brought home to the Musalmans of India the weight and worth of the sayings of a man, who, a few years ago, had warned them of the dangers of the coming events. He had envisaged that sooner or later the movement started by the Congress must inevitably resolve itself into one meant

for the revival of ancient traditions, which would ultimately tend towards the Hindu conception of life and Hindu philosophy, in view, especially, of the unique position the Hindus had come to occupy with the advent of European education and "democratic institutions" growing at the time in British India. His apprehensions were not wholly unjustified in view of the activities already started by a section of powerful and influential individuals, whose utterances both in public and private had amply convinced Sir Syed Ahmed of Aligarh that things might stand in the end against the interests of Muslims, and a time might come when the "national" movement would not be safe in the hands of these men. He thought that it might be then too late for Muslims to recede from their position. He had therefore asked them to keep out of the movement, but nevertheless he provided them with enough scope of reform through institutions like the M.A.-O. College, Muslim Educational Conference and Defence Conference founded by him for their uplift. The whole burden of Sir Syed's policy was that the bulk of Indian Muslims, disorganised as it was at the time, could not under the circumstances carry weight with its opinion. Their salvation lay, hence, in organising themselves through education, through study and through social reform and then taking part in public affairs *en bloc*, after eliciting the popular will of Muslim India.

In the year 1906, therefore, when the national politics passed on to the hands of those who refused to look beyond the domain of their qualified patriotism, the Muslim leaders thought that they could no longer hold their breath and a lead must be given to establish the rights and interests of the Musalmans. In Dacca, at the time the meeting of the Muslim Educational Conference was held, and on the 30th December 1906, after the regular sittings of the conference were over, a number of Muslims met under the chairmanship of Nawab Viqarul Mulk to consider their future.

The Nawab of Dacca on rising introduced the resolution of the day in a lengthy speech and said that a special necessity exerted for increased political activity. The Muslims must galvanise their community. They were awakening from a state of coma. The Muslim movement was, however, not new, but that was a turning point in their course. It was the result of the work of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan. Ever since they had been watching the Indian affairs with interest and now felt a thrill of a new life, as India was on the eve of a new era. They had, however, been dragged into the political arena, on account of the new political institutions that had been forced on them by the inauguration of the British Rule in India. Had the Party in power in England been familiar with the position of

Muslims, and had Indian public men represented justly the Muslim claims, the movement might perhaps not have been heard of, but quiet, unobtrusive work was at a discount as only those who cried loudest had a chance of being heard. The Muslims, thus, were forced against their own wishes to abandon their traditional policy in order to secure an easement of the very real disabilities and avoid the danger to their interests which were neglected whilst other Indians benefited. It was a time when the formation of such a political union as that now proposed—the All-India Muslim League—could not be attended without some peril. But now the horizon was clear and they could take a lead. Twenty years had wrought a vast change, and now the Government were convinced of Muslim fealty, as a great statesman had styled the Muslims, "a force of loyalty to India and one of the great assets of the Empire." The race still war-like, was united, enlightened, loyal and law-abiding. Wiser by experience they saw before them, under the just restraint of lawful rule, a political career just as fifty years ago,* ignorant of all its advantages, they had entered one against the law, bringing upon themselves all the disadvantages therefrom. The time had come when they could no longer keep aloof from the political current and must act according to the times. The following resolution was moved:

* The Revolution of 1857.

"*Resolved that this meeting composed of Musalmans from all parts of India assembled at Dacca decides that a political association, styled 'the All-India Muslim League,' be formed for the furtherance of the following objects:—*

(*a*) To promote among the Musalmans of India the feeling of loyalty to the British Government and remove any misconception that may arise as to the intention of the Government with regard to any of its measures.

(*b*) To protect and advance the political rights and interests of the Musalmans of India, and respectfully to represent the needs and aspirations to Government. And

(c) To prevent the rise among the Musalmans of India of any feeling of hostility towards other communities without prejudice to the other objects of the League."

The resolution was seconded by Hakim Ajmal Khan of Delhi and supported by a dozen speakers. A strong provincial committee was formed with Nawab Mohsinul Mulk and Nawab Viqarul Mulk as Joint Secretaries, to frame a constitution within four months and to authorise and convene

a representative meeting of Indian Muslims at a suitable time and place and put the constitution before that body for its final approval and adoption. A glance at the three objects of the League shows that this organisation came into being for the express purpose to promote conciliatory feelings rather than antagonistic towards the Hindu Congress, result of whose activities was already manifesting in the shape of communal riots. It was formed also with a view to dispel the impression from the British mind of "disloyalty" with which Muslim India was generally branded.

Many Hindu writers have tried to make mountain out of this mole-hill by suggesting that the inauguration of the Muslim League had been inspired by the then Viceroy and his agents. It may be that this move on the part of Muslims looked to the British as a good instrument to strike against the growing menace of the Hindu Congress, but it is obviously futile to say that Musalmans as a community of allied interests could be actuated by nothing more than treachery towards their own country and their own freedom. No movement which had not got the popular support of the people has stood the test of time. How was it that this one, therefore, did not fizzle out immediately after its appearance? Why was it that it emerged instead, during the course of the next few

years as an organisation more united and better developed? Why is it that it has existed all these years, stronger and even more assertive, even to this day? These are questions our Hindu compatriots have never bothered to explore, beyond the circumference of their own convenient theory that Musalmans had acted as tools in the hands of the British Imperialism. If it was legitimate to have the Congress as a constitutional opposition to the British institutions, it was certainly legitimate at the time to have the Muslim League as a constitutional opposition to the Congress policy. But the Hindus and the Hindu Congress were quick in disowning whoever differed from them. Attack followed attack and denunciation was supplemented by denunciation, which was the result of the influence to which the Congress was subjected at the time. The sober-minded leaders, at any rate, had not lost all hope and even though they had found it a bit difficult to handle the unwieldy extremist element, they believed that the situation had not deteriorated so much as to have gone entirely out of their control. They were sure that better counsels would prevail. The small number of Muslim Congressmen, therefore, remained with them intact, and to this section belonged Mohammad Ali Jinnah, faithful and loyal to his creed.

CHAPTER V

IN THE COUNCIL

" Extremists are few, but they are active; their field is wide, their nets are far spread." Thus spoke Viscount Morley on the 21st of October 1907 addressing the constituents of Arbroath. He added: " Anybody who has read history knows that the Extremist often beats the Moderate by his fire, his heated energy, his concentration, by his very narrowness. So be it; we remember it; we watch it all, with that lesson of historic experience full in our minds." Statements of this kind are generally dismissed by Hindu writers as unworthy of consideration, coming as they do from the British statesmen. But the truth of Viscount Morley's utterance is proved by a glance at the proceedings of the Surat Sessions of the Indian National Congress. Had it not been for the prudence of the Moderates like Pherozshah Mehta, Gokhale, Wacha and others the history of the Congress would have been different from what it is to-day. The Surat Congress ended in chaos and was adjourned by the President, Rash Behari Ghose. But these leaders immediately called a National Convention, which was attended by the majority of the delegates present. A Convention Committee was appointed which met at Allahabad on the 18th and 19th of April 1908

and drew up a constitution for the Indian National Congress. They also drew up a set of rules for the conduct of the meetings. Articles I and II are important and run as follows:

Article I. The objects of the Indian National Congress are the attainment by the people of India of a system of Government similar to that enjoyed by the self-governing members of the British Empire and a participation by them in the rights and responsibilities of the Empire on equal terms with those members. These objects are to be achieved by constitutional means, by bringing about a steady reform in the existing system of administration, and by promoting national unity, fostering public spirit, and developing and organising the intellectual, moral, economic and industrial resources of the country.

Article II. Every delegate to the Indian National Congress shall express in writing his acceptance of the objects of the Congress as laid down in Article I of this constitution, and by the rules of the Congress hereto appended.

The twenty-third National Congress adjourned at Surat met at Madras on the 28th, 29th and 30th of December 1908 under this constitution which was finally laid on the table, and one sees Mohammad Ali Jinnah playing his rightful role as one of the supporters of the most important resolutions, con-

cerning the future constitution of India as envisaged in Lord Morley's Despatch. He had now come to occupy a unique position both as a rising lawyer and an ardent patriot.

This period registers an important landmark in the life of Jinnah. There were conflicting forces in operation. On the one hand the forces of bureaucratic rule were active; on the other a set of sincere British politicians were busy working in the larger interests of the peoples of India, though not altogether unmindful of their own imperialistic aims. Mischief was being wrought by the Extremists, and sentimentalism was at its highest tide. India at large was absolutely apathetic and inert owing to gross poverty and ignorance. The peoples stood divided and subdivided amongst themselves. The hope, therefore, was centred upon the intelligentsia growing in number, who would ultimately be responsible to bring about steady progress for the better administration of the country. In the opinion of Jinnah, there was no royal road to progress. Steady and sustained effort was indispensable. Stark realities had got to be faced. Difficulties existing in the shape of various problems that prevented the combination of various elements for a concerted and united action had to be overcome, and salvation lay in the education of mind and thought, both of the individual and of the bulk of the population. A spirit of sacrifice had to be

infused in the individual and the people had to be rallied round to a common ideal.

The experience of Surat Congress had brought home to him various factors which had opened his eyes. It was no use ignoring and denying the existence of active sections of opinion. The Extremists must be brought round to the point of view of constitutional progress and the Hindus must learn to coalesce with the Muslims. The individual must develop a high type of character and an intense feeling of nationality must be cultivated by the whole country. Failure was never a discouraging factor, for out of it would come the strength which would accomplish great tasks. All resources must be exploited. An untiring devotion to the cause with just and reasonable aims was a force that admitted no defeat. This was the frame of mind that made Jinnah, the student of public affairs. This is still the frame of mind that makes Jinnah the matured politician and statesman of to-day.

It was about this time, under the new reforms, that the Government of India, for the first time in the history of the British Rule, condescended to appoint one Indian Member to the Viceroy's Executive Council. The news sent a thrill of joy among those who welcomed even the slightest symptom of progress towards Indianisation of the administration. The portfolio of Law was thrown open and the choice was restricted only to

lawyers of standing. It was thought that S. P. Sinha, a flourishing lawyer of Bengal, would be acceptable to the Viceroy. But in view of his enormous legal practice Sinha was not inclined to accept a far less remunerative post. The onus of convincing Sinha was thrown on Gokhale and Jinnah. Gokhale was then the founder member of the Servants of India Society and Jinnah had established himself well as a lawyer in Bombay. The two stalwarts of patriotism, however, set out for Calcutta and argued with Sinha for considerable time. "It would be a pity," said Gokhale, "if no Indian could be found suitable for the job. The Government of India would then be justified in saying that Indians are not fit for higher posts. You should accept the responsibility at least for some time. We want to establish a precedent, after which it will be difficult for the British to go back." All these arguments, however, would not appeal to Sinha. Two months elapsed in this battle of wits. Gokhale refused to return until he had finally extracted a promise from Sinha. He was determined to stay there as long as he could. But the patience of the younger colleague was not exhausted and one day he took Sinha to task.

"Do you think," said Jinnah, "we are fools to waste our time like that? Do you think Gokhale is a fool to draw only seventy-five rupees from the Servants of India

Society ? Is he not capable of earning more ? Do you think I am not losing my practice in Bombay owing to my being absent from my work ? What are we begging of you for ? Do you think it is something for our own personal good ? We agree that you lose much but you may resume your practice after you have served for some time on the Executive Council in the interest of your country and your people." This reprimand disarmed poor Sinha and he at last agreed to serve his people as the first Indian Law Member for a period of a few months. The story illustrates how difficult it is to practise and pursue even patriotism in this land of ours, and to establish the claims of public good over individual convenience.

Armed with success and recognition the dynamic spirit of Jinnah was set afoot to realise the dream of his mind and he busied himself, with all the forces at his command, to muster round to one ideal—the conflicting opinions of the time, finally serving as a " cross-bencher, at the Conference of Hindu and Muslim leaders convened at Allahabad in 1910, under Sir William Wedderburn's benign direction to consider a somewhat premature and artificial *entente cordiale* between the two communities still so sharply divided by a gulf of mutual dislike and distrust."*

"Unfortunately, the Allahabad conference

*Mrs. Sarojini Naidu : *Ambassador of Unity.*

of which much was expected did not produce the desired result. The Hindus overlooked the fact that those Musalmans who had been returned from separate electorates had co-operated with their fellow members on questions where broader principles were involved and the League had not lagged behind condemning the anti-Asiatic legislation in South Africa and showed its concern for the country. The prejudice of the Hindu leaders did not allow them to see things in their proper perspective. The conference was attended by prominent persons like (Sir) Surendranath Banerji, Mr. Gokhale, (Sir) Sunder Lal, Pt. Madan Mohan Malaviya, (Sir) Tej Bahadur Sapru, Pt. Motilal Nehru, Lord Sinha, the Maharaja of Darbhanga, H. H. the Agha Khan, Nawab Viqarul Mulk, (Sir) Ibrahim Rahimtoola, Mr. M. A. Jinnah, Mr. Hasan Imam, Moulana Mohammad Ali and Hakeem Ajmal Khan. From brilliant politicians and the cream of Indian leaders it was expected that a tangible solution could be arrived at, but the Hindu leaders headed by Pt. Malaviya adopted an uncompromising attitude and banged the door of unity. The questions discussed and finally referred to the various select committees were the establishment of Panchayats, the solution of Urdu-Hindi controversy, the lowering of the rate of interest, national education, the Arya Samaj movement, the playing of music before mosques and cow-sacrifice, the efforts to be made to

stop litigation, the cancellation of the principle of forced auction of mortgaged properties and such other matters. The unbending attitude of the Hindu leaders disappointed the Muslims and convinced them that the Hindus desired no compromise. Thus, while for the first time after the establishment of the League the members of the two organisations met together, a golden opportunity was sacrificed at the altar of false pride."*

During the sessions of the Congress in 1910, it is interesting to note that Mohammad Ali Jinnah was the prime mover of the Resolution deprecating the extension or application of the principle of Separate Communal Electorates to Municipalities, District Boards or other Local Bodies. He, however, did not fail to say that the Resolution embodied his own views. In the same year, however, he was elected a member of the deputation that was to wait upon His Excellency the Viceroy of India to place before him the Congress point of view.

In the autumn of 1909, Mohammad Ali Jinnah had been elected by the Musalmans of Bombay Presidency as their representative to the Supreme Legislative Council. The circumstances that led to his election are amusing and perhaps he himself is unaware of them. Two Knights from Bombay had

*Mohammad Nomad : *Muslim India.*

quarrelled among themselves as to who was the rightful representative of the Muslim interests. Each claimed the sole right of the honour. The issue had to be decided. Discussions went on for hours and in the end both of them decided that none of them should seek election, but should send a third candidate, and after careful scrutiny the choice fell on the "young lawyer." The atmosphere under which these elections took place is best described by Shahani, the biographer of Gokhale.

" The Hindu-Muslim tension, already growing at an alarming pace, reached the utmost limit when the Hindus found their Mohammadan brethren favoured a little more than themselves under the Reforms Scheme. Gokhale had made it perfectly clear in his political creed that the interests of the minorities must be safeguarded to the utmost ; and though he now found that Lord Morley had given their Mohammadan friends even more than what Lord Minto had at first proposed or than what he himself had thought legitimate, he refused to have any quarrel with what they had actually received. He was never weary of reminding his Hindu brethren that the present political position of the country did not allow them to wrangle among themselves : Hindus and Mohammadans together even were too few to obtain from the Government all that they wished for the amelioration of the country.

This tone of moderation was very much appreciated by the enlightened Mohammadans who, to accord them full justice, recognised in Gokhale a leader of all India, regardless of any particular creed or caste and therefore a majority of them unswervingly supported him in his work on the Supreme Council and outside."

Immediately after his election the young Muslim representative had his first encounter with the President of the Council, Lord Minto. The debate on the Resolution on Indentured Labour for Natal came up on the 25th of Feburary. The following is the extract from the proceedings: The Hon. Mr. M. A. Jinnah: "My Lord, I beg to support the Resolution that has been placed before the Council. The Hon'ble the mover put the question before the Council so clearly and concisely that there is very little left for any one else to say. But the importance of this question requires that at least some of us should say a few words and express our feelings on this Resolution. If I may say at the outset, it is a most painful question—a question which has roused the feelings of all classes in this country to the highest pitch of indignation and horror at the harsh and cruel treatment that is meted out to Indians in South Africa."

His Excellency the President (Lord

Minto): " I must call the Hon'ble gentleman to order. I think that is rather too strong a word, 'cruelty.' The Hon'ble Member must remember that he is talking of a friendly part of the Empire, and he must really adapt his language to the circumstances."

The Hon. Mr. M. A. Jinnah: " Well, my Lord, I should feel inclined to use much stronger language, but I am fully aware of the constitution of this Council, and I do not wish to trespass for one single moment, but I do say this, that the treatment that is meted out to Indians is the harshest which can possibly be imagined, and, as I said before, the feeling in this country is unanimous."

Such a courageous attitude on the part of a non-official elected member was unheard of in those days. The local press displayed the incident in bold headlines, and at once Jinnah became the public favourite. But the two Knights of Bombay regretted having made a wrong choice.

The parliamentary genius of Mohammad Ali Jinnah manifested itself in him from the earliest times of his parliamentary activity. During the course of a debate on the Resolution tabled by Babu Bhupendra Nath Basu, in the Imperial Legislative Council in March 1912, on the subject of Police Administra-

tion, Jinnah's short and pithy speech conveying vividly his attitude towards the Resolution is characteristic of this great Muslim statesman. Basu's Resolution really consisted of two parts, one dealing with Police Administration and the other with amendments to the Law of Confession. In both these matters inquiry through a Commission was demanded. On rising to speak, Jinnah made it clear at the outset that he did not wish to enter into any controversy either of a racial, national or personal character, and thought that it was not desirable that questions that came before the House should be viewed from that angle. The problem was primarily one affecting the administration of this country, and whether there was a particular evil that was to be remedied or a particular system that was to be altered. He, therefore, said he was going to deal with the Resolution purely on its merits. Basu had given a long list of the evils of the Police system. Jinnah wanted to add one more from Bombay and he pointed out how a nobleman, the Chief of Hoti, was implicated in a case of abduction and was refused bail by the Presidency Magistrate, and how after being committed to the Sessions the Advocate-General representing the prosecution had to withdraw the prosecution against the gentleman and how the presiding Judge made the severest remarks against

the Police of Northern India observing that such a case should never have been brought before the Court at all. He, therefore agreed with the Resolution that a Commission must be appointed to inquire into the evils. As to the second part of the Resolution, he said he failed to understand the point of view of Basu. He cited two instances from the Madras and Bombay High Courts concerning the Law of Confession and opined that a Commission was not necessary but the Council and the Law Member were quite capable to deal with any legal flaws in the matter. " Why usurp this Council," concluded Jinnah, " of its proper functions and leave a matter of this kind to a Commission, when we can do that ourselves here? Therefore Sir, I do not understand the latter part of the Resolution. I support the first part of the Resolution."

The opening sentences of Jinnah's speech in April 1912 during the sessions of the Imperial Legislative Council in support of Gokhale's Elementary Education Bill are characteristic again of this astute Muslim leader. The note of sincere and deep feeling behind his utterance are in perfect harmony with the extraordinary pluck that unfolds itself in exuberant profusion.

"Sir, I do not think that anybody in this Council can deny the paramount importance of this measure. It has been said that

this Bill is going to be thrown out. It is very often said in this Council that unless Government are willing to accept any Resolution or any measure, it cannot be passed in this Council. Now I, for one, do not wish in any way to taunt Government in this matter. In the Council, as it is constituted now, we know perfectly well that the intention is not that in this Council we can defeat the Government and replace the Government Bench by the people of this country, by non-official members. In the Council, as it is constituted now, it is well understood that it is impossible to appeal to the Council and ask them to vote on any resolution or measure according to their own convictions; but the sole function of the non-official members—a minority—is only to express their views on all questions that came before this Council. That being the sole function to which I am reduced here, I think that on an important measure of this character I should not give my silent vote, but should express my views and give my reasons in support of this Bill. I regret very much that some of my countrymen are opposed to this Bill. Well, Sir, it is our misfortune that there should be this difference of opinion. One thing I can assure this Council of and that is this, that a great and overwhelming majority of my people are with me. When I was speaking on the Marriage Bill the other day, I frankly and openly admitted that the majority of my people were

opposed to that measure. But my innermost convictions were in favour of that measure, and I felt it my duty to support the motion. In the same spirit I ask those who are opposed to this Bill to concede to me that the great majority of my countrymen, Hindus and Musalmans, are in favour of and support the Bill. That being so, Sir, I have a double satisfaction, not only my innermost convictions are in favour of this Bill, which shall always be the first and foremost consideration with me either in opposing or supporting a measure, but I have the additional happiness that even the opinion of my countrymen, of the majority of them, is in favour of it."

"......My friend the Hon'ble Nawab Abdul Majid has said that there will be strikes and there will be Socialists amongst us, and I think the Hon'ble Nawab Majid brought in the political danger that if you give education they will become agitators. Well, Sir, I honestly and sincerely appeal to the Government. Do you really think that education means sedition? I say, Sir, that a frank and independent criticism of the Government or the measures of the Government is the duty of every member of the State. But let me tell you that you have no better friends in this country—I mean the friends of the Government—than the educated classes of this country. But, if I may

say so, we love the British Government, but we love our country more. We come forward and criticise the Government. We say, 'You are going wrong. It may be we are wrong : It does not follow because we say you are wrong therefore you are wrong.' But surely fair, free and independent criticisms of the Government do not constitute sedition."

In conclusion he argued that the proposition before the House for the moment was that the Bill in question should be referred to the Select Committee and, therefore, he did not wish to indulge in any controversy, but he thought that certain requirements would be necessary in the interest of Muslims in the current state and condition of the people in this country. "Therefore, I will rest content," said he, "by saying this, that if this Bill were referred to the Select Committee, and if this Bill did not provide for certain requirements and modifications which I think are just in the interests of the Musalmans, I would certainly then be the first to oppose it. But the present state of this Bill is a motion to refer it to the Select Committee and that motion I have no hesitation in supporting."

The above extracts of the speech throw a beam of light over a subject of vital importance which arises out of that ill-fated word—Nationalism. This great Muslim leader—the future hope of Muslim India—in the midst of

his staunch nationalistic views did not exclude those essential features of justice and fairplay, which pervade all true sentiments of nationalism. His alliance at the time with the Indian National Congress was in the pious hope that he could do much more for the Musalmans from within the Congress than from without. He believed that the destinies of his people were linked with the rest of India's population and that by India's political progress Muslims were bound to profit. The affairs of the Congress were in the hands of the realists, and zeal and enthusiasm had not reduced this principle to a mere slogan. He was not one of those who indulged in a whirlwind of catch-words and empty phrases. Instead he kept his eyes open to the realities of life. The backwardness of Muslims had to be faced, and exceptions had to be made to accommodate necessities. Nor was he one of those who have no courage to stand by their convictions and let the principle of a life-time be sacrificed on the altar of timidity or barter it away for the luxury of vain-glory.

The natural powers of analysis and the deep knowledge of law that this great man possesses are qualities which are universally recognised in him even by his severest adversaries. His speeches in the Imperial Legislative Council in 1913 in connection with the Indian Extradition Bill and the Indian Criminal Law Amendment Bill illustrate how much interest he had taken from the very beginning in the

shaping and interpretation of Law. His alacrity to do something substantially good for his people and the studied interest with which he took part in the Council debates, won him the praises of all his contemporaries at all times. The following extract of his speech in connection with the Criminal Law Amendment Bill is an example.

"Sir, I want first of all to put it before the Council very clearly that nobody more readily would respond to that appeal that has come from the Home Member than I would; also I wish to express that nobody condemns in stronger terms the misdeeds of which a long list was given to us a few minutes ago by the Home Member. I also wish to express that every attempt on the part of my countrymen to undermine the authority of the Government and to disturb law and order, in my opinion, deserves the strongest condemnation and the highest punishment. Those men who have a desire to undermine the authority of the Government, those men who have a desire to disturb law and order, are, in my opinion, the biggest enemies of my country and my people. They are to-day doing the greatest harm to the cause of India. Sir, why is this measure brought before this Council to-day? It is brought because of the doings of some of my countrymen. Repressive measures that have been brought in, in this Council, have been brought because of the misdeeds of some of our coun-

trymen. I remember, Sir, in 1910, when the Press Bill was introduced at Calcutta, much as we felt that a severe blow was going to be dealt at the liberty of the Press, much as we felt that our most prized liberty, namely, the liberty of the Press was going to be curtailed, our hands were tied, our mouths were closed by the misdeeds of some of the misugided men who belong to our country, and we almost, as a body of non-official members, realised and felt that the Government were bound to take certain measures to maintain order and law; and reluctant as we were, we felt that, although we were losing what we prized most, namely, the liberty of the Press, to a certain extent, we not only supported it, but we supported it with every power that was in our possession.

"Sir, I believe in criticising Government, I believe in criticising Government freely and frankly, but at the same time that it is the duty of every educated man to support and help the Government when the Government is right. On this occasion I feel that having regard to the history of political crimes, my hands are tied, my mouth is closed and my countrymen who are responsible for these deeds are responsible to-day for my position which I occupy in this Council at this moment. Let those men who still have these misguided ideas, let those men who have these hallucinations, realise that, by anarchism, by dastardly crimes, they cannot bring about good Government, let them yet realise that

these methods have not succeeded in any country in the world, and are not likely to succeed in India. Let those men yet realise before it is too late, and before they bring their country into a position which may be more regretted by every patriot who feels for and loves his motherland, let them yet realise that these are not the methods. Sir, if I may say so, I represent a class, an educated class and young India in this country. Representing the modern India and the young educated class in this country, I feel that I am expressing their sentiments on this occasion and I feel that there is a large body of men who feel exactly as I am feeling to-day. The Hon'ble Home Member said: 'We have got cause, we have considered our position, and we ask the Council to take us on trust and support the Government.' Having regard to the position that I have described, I have no alternative, Sir, but to take the Government on trust on this occasion. I, therefore, think, Sir, that so far as the principle of this Bill is concerned I am not in a position to resist it."

The professors of the so-called puritan type of nationalism of to-day would undoubtedly characterise such a declaration as nothing but an outcome of a reactionary mind. But happily in the good old days of early reforms patriotism and national spirit were not the monopoly of a selected few. The reason why Jinnah escaped general criticism was that the aim before him was at that time, as it always

has been ever before and since, public solidarity and it had to be achieved at all costs. For that end in view he would rather sacrifice the liberty of a few individuals, who in his opinion had been a source of friction, than impair the possibility of realising the larger liberties. Not that he was not sorry for those who were affected, but he could not help it. Secondly, the affairs of the country were in the hands of those whose actions were not actuated by selfish and sectarian motives and a spirit of trust and comradeship prevailed. Jinnah maintained that it was necessary for India's safety and progress that friendly relations should be maintained with the rulers, and anarchist risings would be detrimental to a cordial atmosphere.

He, however, was not prepared to let India go unrewarded for his liberal attitude. He wanted this noble feeling to be reciprocated. The following extract from the same debate is worth mentioning.

" Sir, I will again say that this is a very serious moment—a moment at which I do not think it would be right for us in any way to embarrass the Government, but there is one thing which I wish to say, that just as there are in India certain people who are responsible for a great deal of mischief, so you have certain people who claim to be supporters of or belong to the rank and file of Government, who are also responsible for a great deal of mischief. I wish to draw attention to what I read in a

newspaper the other day, and that is an extract from the *London Times*—a paper that calls itself the leading paper in Europe. The heading is "Congress Party and Sedition"—"Drastic Proposals Offered." I will read an extract and the Council will allow me to ask how a paper of this character should allow an article so ill-considered or so ill-advised and calculated to hurt the feelings of many of us in India, who, I assure you, Sir, are as anxious to maintain the authority of the Government of India and are as anxious to maintain law and order as any member of the Government present here.

"The article is levelled against those stalwart men, those patriots who head the Congress and have been serving their country. I say, Sir, that I am proud that I belong to the Congress Party. That such an article should be written with these insinuations and these aspersions is likely to cause as much mischief as anything that I can think of. The article runs as follows:

'*Congress Party and Sedition:*
'*Drastic Proposals Offered*

'A London cablegram says: "An article in the March number of the *Round Table*, on the Delhi outrage, argues that 'as the Nationalist leaders' opposition to the Government influences the extremists in the direction of political crimes, the leaders themselves must seek out the sources of conspiracy and prevent

their further activity, otherwise the Government may be compelled to say that if political murders recur all representative institutions must be suspended.'

" The *Times* says : The threat of suspension is obviously impossible. It would not be fair to ask the constitutional politicians of India to join in a hunt for the criminals, but it is reasonable to tell them that they cannot for ever evade responsibility, if by opposition they even unconsciously foment disorder, which finds expression in crime. They must either modify their attitude or do something more than express pious horror when outrages occur. By precept and active influence they must set themselves to create a strong feeling of antagonism to conspiracy and must inculcate the duty of helping the Government to detect the offenders. Should they continue to fail in these responsibilities, the verdict must go against them, and anyhow it may be safely said that there can be no further extension of political reform in India while anarchism remains unextirpated.

" The *Times* adds : We are not satisfied that the duty of repressing crime in India is at present efficiently performed, though whether the fault lies chiefly with India or England is open to question. The fact that India is only now bringing its law of political conspiracy into line with Britain shows that the element of precaution has been lacking. Much

more might have been done if the police had been better supported and shielded from undeserved attack, if criminals have been caught red-handed and received swift and sharp punishment, if the scandals of interminable political trials had been summarily rectified, and if foolish and mistaken clemency had been less frequent."

"Now, Sir, the threat is held out to us that we must find out the culprit. It we do not find out the culprit our political institutions must be suspended."

The President: "I am very loath to interrupt the Hon'ble Member but he has quoted a document which is not a Government document and one which in no way pledges the Government or the policy of the Government."

The Hon'ble Mr. Jinnah: "Yes, Sir, I know that, but I only wish to point out that there is this kind of mischief going on. My appeal to the Government is this—I want the Government to take and give expression to the views, that just as you wish us to co-operate with you, just as you expect us to stand by you, in the same way you must stand by us and condemn those who are creating this mischief—just as you condemn those among us who are guilty of misdeeds, just as you expect us to join and co-operate with you in condemning our own men who

are guilty of misdeeds, so you must condemn your men who are also guilty of misdeeds. That is a point which I wish to make clear and that is the reason why I am drawing the attention of the Council to the writings of what is known as the leading journal in England."

The fact that Mohammad Ali Jinnah was specially nominated to the Council by the Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, for an extra term in 1913 to enable him to introduce the famous Wakf Validating Bill, bears testimony that his extraordinary abilities as a Councillor did not go unheeded. In the words of Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, " his admirable skill and tact in piloting through such an intricate and controversial measure—the first instance of a Bill passing into legislation on the motion of a private member—won him not only the appreciation of his colleagues but also his first meed of his general recognition from his co-religionists all over India, who while still regarding him a little outside the orthodox pale of Islam were so soon to seek his advice and guidance in their political affairs."

On the 11th of March, 1913, on the 30th day of its sittings, Jinnah appeared in Bombay as a witness before the Public Services Commission, presided over by Lord Islington—a chapter which will always remain memorable in the annals of his valuable and a constructive contribution towards the welfare of his people.

CHAPTER VI

THE SPIRIT OF UNION

The march of time was working its subtle influences over the mind of Muslim India. Prominent Hindu leaders assisted by influential Muslims were discussing the feasibility of a working settlement between the two great national groups for the salvation of the country as a whole. Although the Allahabad Conference of 1910 had ended without any tangible results the leaders had not lost hope of an ultimate union. In came the Royal Proclamation announcing the annulment of the Partition of Bengal. This unique move on the part of the British Government, in spite of their professions that Partition was a "settled fact," explained the policy underlying the award of a few concessions to Muslim representation in the Councils, against which Hindus and the National Congress had not failed to raise a protest. The annulment was celebrated throughout the length and breadth of India by Hindus. The Musalmans were flabbergasted. For the first time it was demonstrated how far agitation and propaganda could triumph over reason and argument to the utter disregard of justice and honour. The rendition of Partition of Bengal came as a great

shock to the Muslims as it was carried out without any reference to them.*

Amounting to nothing more than a gross breach of faith, the Royal Proclamation served only to destroy the Muslim confidence hitherto so ungrudgingly placed in the hands of the British Government. Their loyalty was for a little while shaken, and the occasion was made use of and fully exploited by Hindus to their benefit.

Side by side with this, however, certain events in the European international situation were causing much anxiety to Muslims. Balkan Provinces had made a successful attempt to free themselves from the influence of the Ottoman Empire. In this attempt they were greatly helped by England and Russia. This and the ruthless eradication of the Young Turk Movement by the Sultan with British help had aggravated Muslim public excitement in India. At home also new stars were rising. In 1912, Dr. Ansari led a medical mission to Turkey. The powerful pens of Maulana Shibli Nomani, Maulana Mohammad Ali and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad were inviting their fellow-men to keep themselves awake, and a gradual growth of political consciousness was unveiling itself.

The general change brought about in the

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* *The Communal Triangle in India*: p. 31

Muslim point of view at this time was due to various factors. Firstly, the ruthless sacrifice of Muslim interests by the annulment of the Partition of Bengal and the remarkable courage of the British Government in going back upon their word notwithstanding the promises made by them to Musalmans, had brought home to Muslim India the fact that trust misplaced is often dishonoured.

Secondly, the outbreak of the Balkan Wars and the increasing deterioration of Turkish power had roused public sentiment against England. Thirdly, the Muslim intelligentsia had been dazzled by the growing power of the dominantly Hindu organisation—the Indian National Congress. It was felt that no other organisation, however powerful, could ever combat the forces of the Congress, and that it was best to regulate Muslim politics both from within and without the Congress. Fourthly, a set of strong men, both Hindus and Muslims, were busy in bringing about a union of minds between the two nations, a common ideal and a common platform in order to secure for India political freedom. These men toiling incessantly had succeeded a great deal in easing the situation. Hindus and Muslims had now come together—the former, because an opportunity had presented itself when they could win the favour of the Muslims and the latter, because they had lost all faith in the British. An atmosphere of

trust was created and Hindus and Muslims were now willing to reciprocate confidence in each other, for their vital interests. Among these men were included Mohammad Ali Jinnah and Gopal Krishna Gokhale who were constantly at work with a remarkable sincerity of purpose that is still unmatched among Indians.

In 1910 and 1911, the Council of the All-India Muslim League had recommended a radical change in the constitution of the League. Mohammad Ali Jinnah was invited to attend the meetings and requested to address them. Discussions went on for a couple of years and after careful consideration of the situation it was decided during the exciting sessions of the League held in Lucknow in 1913 that the ideal adopted should be the "attainment under the aegis of the British Crown of a system of self-government suitable to India through constitutional means, by bringing about, amongst other, a steady reform of the existing system of administration by promoting national unity, by fostering public spirit among the people of India, and by co-operation with other communities for the said purpose."

It is, however, noteworthy that, as early as 1913, the League had desisted from placing before itself any model, either on the lines of Western institutions or otherwise, for the future Constitution of India. The colonial

form of government embodied in the creed of the Congress did not find favour with the League. The idea of self-government was left vague, to be shaped and moulded according to the turn of events. That the League creed was incorporated with the suggestion of Jinnah himself is evident from the extract of the speech of Mian (Sir) Mohammad Shafi on this occasion. "The adoption of the alternative proposal," said he, "put forward by some of our friends that the League should set up a colonial form of government as its ultimate goal is, in my opinion, inadmissible as well as politically unsound. The political conditions, internal and external, prevailing in the British Colonies, have no analogy whatsoever with that obtaining in India and I am in entire accord with my friend the Hon. Mr. Jinnah in thinking that the adoption of any course other than the one proposed by the Council would be absolutely unwise."

Jinnah's influence, however, is more vividly felt by a glance over the following resolution that the League adopted:

"The All-India Muslim League places on record its firm belief that the future development and progress of the people of India depend on the harmonious working and co-operation of the various communities and hopes that leaders of both sides will periodically meet together to find a *modus operandi* for

joint and concerted action in questions of public good."

The service that Mohammad Ali Jinnah had been rendering to India in general and to the cause of Hindu-Muslim unity in particular had attracted the attention of both the Hindu and Muslim intelligentsia. By dint of his ardent patriotism and love of unity he earned from his senior colleague, Gokhale, a tribute which would always stand out in the records of India's political history, proclaiming his creditable share to the cause. "He has true stuff in him," said Gokhale, "and that freedom from all sectarian prejudice which will make him the best ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity." Scores of admirers were drawn towards him, and as he himself told the author once, no non-Muslim could claim so much intimacy with Hindu life as he could at the time. He had recourse to the most sacred parts of the Hindu household including the kitchen and in most cases he was regarded as a member of the family. Perhaps the most ardent of Jinnah's admirers was Mrs. Sarojini Naidu. "Never was there a nature whose outer qualities provided so complete an antithesis of its inner worth. Tall and stately, but thin to the point of emaciation, languid and luxurious of habit, Mohammad Ali Jinnah's attenuated form is the deceptive sheath of a spirit of exceptional vitality and endurance."

Having won to his credit a universal

recognition and admiration at home Jinnah proceeded to Europe in the middle of April, 1913, in search of a long, idle holiday, with Gokhale for fellow traveller. But "once in England, however, there was no rest for this tireless worker. He was at once drawn into the tangled web of the Indian student world whose cause he espoused with such assiduous zeal and understanding. Within a few weeks of his arrival he founded the London Indian Association which forms so excellent a focus for the otherwise scattered energies and activities of Young India in a foreign land; and it was mainly at his instance that a committee was appointed by the India Office to inquire into the legitimate grievances of Indian students suffering so keenly from an unnecessary and unaccountable set of new rules and restrictions hindering their admission into educational centres hitherto so hospitable and so easy of access." *

A public meeting was held on the 28th of June, 1913, at the Caxton Hall, Westminster, to discuss a scheme for the establishment of a Central Association in London for Indian students. Addressing the gathering Jinnah said, he had spent five or six years as a student in England and was now an annual visitor. He had done his best to make himself acquainted with the feelings of Indian students, and had been struck by one remarkable cir-

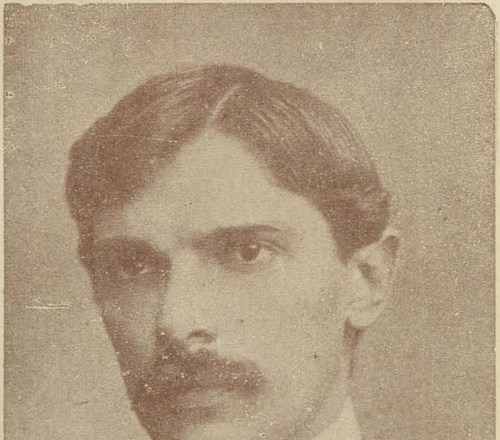
* Mrs. Naidu.

cumstance. They were suffering, it seemed to him, from what he might call the bane of India, the caste system—a system which, admirable though it might have been when initiated, was now responsible for the backwardness of their country. In England also, he found they had set up a dozen such societies, but they lacked one thing, a central organisation where they could meet together and form friendships.

The position of the Indian students in England was, in his opinion, one without parallel. They went to England between the ages of eighteen and twenty-three ; they were totally separated from their relatives and friends ; they were away from the influence of their elders ; they had no one to guide them. The Indian student class was typically representative of the best their country could produce, and their action and conduct reflected upon their country. They were, so to speak, the custodians of the reputation of India. Unfortunately at the time, so far as the British public was concerned, they had not a good name. Instead of conducting themselves merely as students and learning all they could of the civilisation which the British people had taken centuries to build up, they had been tempted to use strong language and take strong action in the political field.

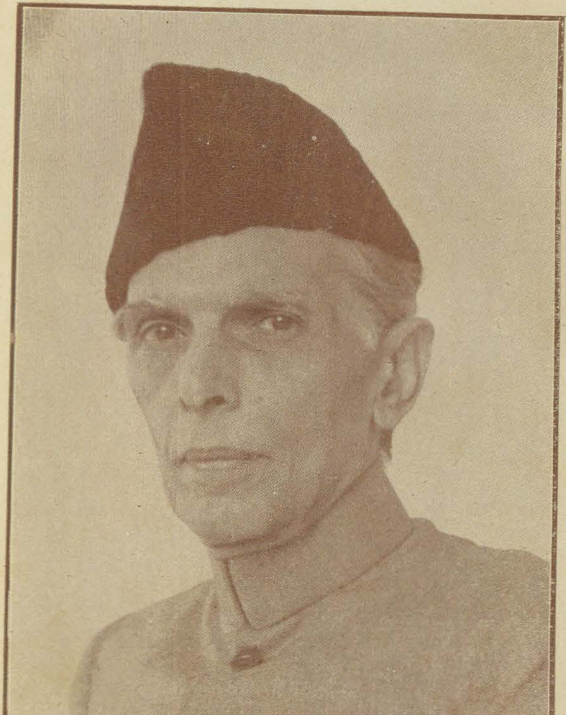
It might be asked, he said, why their liberty should be restricted because of the acts

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of one or two mad men among them. He agreed that their liberty ought not to be restricted; but he would remind them that they were scarcely competent to deal with the political problems presented before their country. Nobody appreciated more than he did, the honesty of their purpose or the patriotism which had induced them to do what they had done; but it was time for them seriously to consider their position. To take part in politics would simply be to injure their position as students. It was in the light of these views that there was no proposal to include, among the objects of the Central Association, students' participation in politics. Neither did he propose that it should be the duty of the organisation to watch over and safeguard the particular interests of Indian students in Great Britain. He abstained from that deliberately, because he did not want them to come into conflict with the authorities in any way. They should not for instance, undertake to fight the case of a student refused admission to an Inn of Court or a University College. Jinnah pointed out that the Executive in England had agents in India who secured the fullest possible information as to students, and although the information might be wrong it was utterly impossible for any association to take up the case of a student unless it could have equally effective means of obtaining knowledge of the student's history.

What then was the proposed association to do? Through this association, he declared, they were, in the first place, going to get rid of the exclusiveness which was the outcome of having many different clubs and societies, and they were going to develop the opportunities for a wider national outlook. By communion of one another, by the exchange of ideas, they would come better to understand one another; they would get broader views, they would widen their outlook, and make themselves fit for the more responsible duties which would fall on them when they returned home. In India men who were taking the most active part in politics were men who were educated in England and had returned home to serve their country. The students of the past were the active politicians of the moment. By all means they could mix with the English people also and make friends among them. But he thought they should make it their first duty while they were in that country to meet and understand their own countrymen. It was their presence in England that gave them opportunity of coming into contact with others from all parts of India. If they loved their country, as he was sure they did, they would make this sacrifice. At the same time the proposed association would give them an opportunity of debating objects in which all were interested. He did not ask them to eschew political discussion. They would be at liberty to discuss such matters, but they must

not think of sending their resolutions to the Press or to high Government officials, as the views of their association. Finally, he hoped in due course of time they would be able to establish a club house, and he believed that if they showed their worth, if they went on the lines he was suggesting, there would be no difficulty as to finding the necessary money. He said they must not give the Government cause to take precautionary measures, and they must observe a high code of honour and morality in that country; they should abandon strong language and hysterical outbursts. They should instead become earnest workers and serious thinkers, and then they could hope to go back home as great missionaries in the cause of progress.

With these hopes Muhammad Ali Jinnah founded the Central Association for his young countrymen, whose energies he wanted to be directed into right channels. Here was a clear indication as to what were his views regarding students taking part in practical politics—views which have since then hardly seen any change.

On the eve of his departure for India in the autumn of 1913, he was formally enrolled a member of the All-India Muslim League, at the express desire of his friends, Maulana Mohammad Ali and Syed Wazir Hasan, who also happened to be in England in connection

with the League work. "Typical of his exquisite, if somewhat exigent sense of honour, is it to find that even so simple an incident partook of something like a sacrament. His two sponsors were required to make a solemn preliminary covenant that loyalty to the Muslim League and the Muslim interest would in no way and at no time imply even the shadow of disloyalty to the largest national cause to which his life was dedicated." *

Back in India Mohammad Ali Jinnah once again found himself amid the intricate problems which his country had in store for him. The growing anxiety of Muslims, on the one hand, regarding the Turkish situation which had found an echo even in the presidential address of the Congress, (the President happened to be a Muslim at the time) and the inefficiency of public administration, on the other, were the questions that required his immediate attention. The band of untiring, sincere workers were busy in bringing the Hindus and Muslims together. On the 27th December, 1913, in the sessions of the All-India National Congress at Karachi, Bhupendra Nath Basu moved a resolution welcoming the adoption by the Muslim League of the ideal of self-government for India, and the declaration of the necessity of harmonious co-operation to be found in the leaders deciding on joint concerted action. Basu said that Hindus

* Mrs. Naidu.

and Muslims must concentrate their attention on the one united ideal, for the India of the day was not the India of the Hindus or the Muslims, nor of the Anglo-Indians, much less of the Europeans, but the India in which all had a share. "If there had been misunderstandings in the past, let us forget them." If they were united "the India of the future will be stronger, nobler, greater, higher, and a brighter India than was realised by Asoka in the plenitude of his power, a better India than was revealed to Akbar in the wildest of his visions."

The reward due to a veracious worker for an honest cause came to Mohammad Ali Jinnah, who was determined to play his part as an ambassador of unity. He found it in the resolution of the Congress reciprocating the friendly sentiment expressed by the League for co-operation and friendship. Having used his good offices, having utilised the blessings of his presence to the advantage of his peoples, he himself was the prime mover of the resolution dealing with the reform of the India Council. Taking great pride in the fact he was speaking from a platform in the city of his birth, he explained to the audience that the Council of the Secretary of State for India was composed of officials and was divided into several groups as committees, performing functions allocated to them. One objection—and that was the strongest in his opinion—was

that the Council was entirely composed of officials who went from India. He did not mean that officials were, as a class, an undesirable class. But they went from India with certain formed opinions on the administration of the country. Naturally, therefore, they could not think beyond the purview of their own set minds and had no intention to admit any change of circumstance or of outlook. This, in his opinion, impeded the progress of the country. The second objection was that Indian public opinion did not find a place in the Council. Thirdly, he thought that the functions of the Council should be purely advisory and not administrative. He further submitted that the salary of the Secretary of State for India should be debited to Britain, so that he should be responsible to Parliament. The resolution, therefore, suggested concrete proposals for the reform of the India Council and he commended it to the acceptance of the audience.

THE RESOLUTION

"That this Congress is of opinion that the Council of the Secretary of State for India, as at present constituted, should be abolished, and makes the following suggestions for its construction :

"(*a*) That the salary for the Secretary of State for India should be placed on the English estimates.

"(*b*) That with a view to the efficiency and independence of the Council it is expedient that it should be partly nominated and partly elected.

"(*c*) That the total number of members of the Council should not be less than nine.

"(*d*) That the elected portion of the Council should consist of not less than one-third of the total number of members, who should be non-official Indians chosen by a constituency consisting of the elected members of the Imperial and Provincial Legislative Councils.

"(*e*) That not less than one-half of the nominated portion of the Council should consist of public men of merit and ability unconnected with Indian administration.

"(*f*) That the remaining portion of the nominated Council should consist of officials who have served in India for not less than ten years and have not been away from India for more than two years.

"(*g*) That the character of the Council should be advisory and not administrative.

"(*h*) That the term of office of each member should be five years."

The year 1914 saw Mohammad Ali Jinnah an ardent patriot contributing his mite to the cause of India's welfare both as a staunch member of the Congress and as an influential Leaguer. The intimate knowledge that he showed with the working of the India Council during the preceding sessions of the Congress and the Agra sessions of the League, won him a place in the Congress Delegation that was to proceed to England concerning the proposed reforms of the Council and in the month of May he returned to England.

In a country where the personal element forms an integral part of public success, it was no small compliment to Jinnah's social as well as mental qualities that he was chosen to be the spokesman of articulate India before the representatives of the British Parliament and the British public. The leading English journals published numerous interviews and his concise and lucid statement of the Indian case which appeared in the London *Times* attracted widespread attention and comment.

Sir William Wedderburn entertained the Congress delegates in London at the Westminster Palace Hotel, in May, 1914, and a

very large number of gentlemen were present to welcome the delegates, when Mohammad Ali Jinnah spoke. He said that Lord Crewe had in contemplation a Bill which was intended to reform the India Council—which was really the head of the Government of India and the highest tribunal in all matters executive. It had created a most satisfactory impression in India that an opportunity for stating their views should be given to them by the Government before the Bill was introduced in the British Parliament. At the present moment the Council was composed of ten members. Two were financial experts, and the rest, who were nominated by the Secretary of State, were connected with the administration of India. Although Lord Morley very recently recognised that anybody who could give first-hand information on Indian matters to his Council would prove a very desirable member of that body, and although he gave effect to that view by appointing two Indian members, those two gentlemen were nominated members only, and while they had done excellent work, and had tried, to the best of their ability and judgment, to place the views of the Indian peoples before the Council, yet something more was desired. It was necessary that the Secretary of State should be kept in intimate touch with the trend of public opinion in India. Men who were connected with the administration and were brought up in the service, were debarred

by the virtue of the rules of that very service from attending political meetings, and thereby obtaining the clear insight which was necessary for them to adequately represent Indian opinion. Jinnah wanted men who were in touch with public feeling and acquainted with public sentiment and public opinion, and therefore in a position to put before the Secretary of State views which men connected with the service could not possibly do. How were they to secure representatives of this character? His suggestion was that the only possible way was to introduce the principle of election. Once they got elected members on the Council, they would have representatives who would be responsible to the people of India, and who would not secure re-election if their work had not proved satisfactory. The proposal he had first to submit was that the Council should consist of a minimum number of nine members—one:third of whom should be elected Indians. The principle of election had already been recognised over and over again in regard to this Council. More than one attempt had been made to reform it, and on every occasion the principle of election had been recognised. But the difficulty was to form the electorates. He quite agreed that the problem presented great difficulty in times gone by, but now they had already got an electorate in India which had been existing for a number of years. He could best illustrate it by describing what occurred in the Presi-

dencies of Bombay, Madras or Bengal which sent their representatives to the Imperial Council. In the last two elections that had taken place under the new Council Act, and even before, they had chosen their representatives in Bombay to the Imperial Council in this way. The non-official members of the Local Council elected those whom they sent to the Imperial Council.

Thus they had a ready-made electorate in the elected members of the Provincial Councils. Those elected members could choose the members to represent them on the Imperial Council. He thought that would prove a most satisfactory electorate. It would secure the choice of really representative men. The system had already obtained a certificate from eminent officials in India, like Sir Guy Fleetwood Wilson, and the late and the then Viceroy. As to the character of the Council, Jinnah's suggestion was that it should be advisory and not administrative. It had been given out that the portfolio system was to be introduced. He thought that would be fatal and dangerous. It would mean duplicating the machinery and reducing the Secretary of State to a mere figure-head. If each man was to be placed in charge of a portfolio, and if he was to be necessarily connected with the administration, it would mean that a man who had retired from the service in India, would be called upon to dispose of matters which

were the subject of complaint against the very class from which he was drawn. Hitherto, the Secretary of State had not only dealt with matters of detail, but also with matters of principle and policy. It was in the fitness of things that there should be antagonism between the official and the non-official views on these questions—questions, for instance, such as the separation of the Executive from the Judiciary —or the extension of Elementary Education or the Press Act. The Secretary of State, consequently, when these matters came before him would be unable to hear both sides of the question if he had nothing but the official element surrounding him. He wanted the Secretary of State to be made the real master of the situation. He wanted him to be placed in possession of the real facts on both sides. Of course, ultimately, the decision rested with him. The full Council, might come to a unanimous conclusion on a particular subject which the Secretary of State might not accept, for he had very wide powers. He further submitted that no distinction should be made between the Indian members of the Council and their colleagues. If any distinction was made it would be demoralising not only the whole Council but the Indian members as well. It had also been suggested that if they had the portfolio system, they would not be able to get Indian members of the Council with the requisite experience of administration in India, and, therefore, the Indian members would not

be able properly to discharge their duties, if placed in charge of a portfolio. It was next suggested that the period of appointment should be five years. While it was necessary to have men who could place the public point of view before the Secretary of State, it was proposed that one-third of the Council should consist of the official class, one-third of the non-official class, and the remaining one-third should be men of merit and ability in public life in United Kingdom unconnected with the Indian administration. This third would hold the balance between the two other sections. They would bring to bear upon the deliberations of the Council that independent judgment which was so characteristic of public men in England. If these proposals were accepted, they would have a Council composed of three different groups—each specialising in a different branch, but all helping the deliberations of the Council over which the Secretary of State presided. The Secretary of State for India, to whatever political party he belonged, had always been an eminent British statesman who had done his best for India; but even the best of men required some kind of control and check. The Secretary of State, no doubt, was responsible to Parliament and the British public in theory, but in practice he was not really responsible and what was finally suggested was that his salary should be placed upon the British estimates. In that case they would have real effective control by Parliament.

Indian members, and not one-third of the total number; the minimum number being seven and the maximum ten; so the demand for three Indian members is rejected.

"Secondly, the Bill denied the election of the Indian members for all practicable purposes. The Secretary of State for India, under the provisions of the Bill, shall select Indian members from amongst the persons whose names appear on the list of persons domiciled in India, chosen for the purpose by members (other than the official members) of the Legislative Councils, the Governor-General, Governors, Lieutenant-Governors and the Chief Commissioner, in such manner, subject to such conditions and restrictions and in such number as may be prescribed by regulations to be made by the Secretary of State for India in Council or by directions issued by the Secretary of State thereunder.

"Now, there is no doubt that what appears at the first blush on paper to be some sort of principle of election is for all practical purposes illusory; and the so-called list, or to put it in other words, panel is to be formed by the choice of non-official members of various Councils. This sounds as if the officials will have no voice in the choosing of the list or the forming of the panel, but anyone who knows the actual constitution of the various Legislative Councils will see at once that the non-official members mean elected as well as

members nominated by the Government in various parts of India (that is, the officials in the country), and there is a large number of such members in various Councils who are bound in the very nature of things to follow the behest of the official class and this class of nominated members will have a very potent voice in the formation of the panel, to say nothing of a certain element of even elected members who will not be able to exercise free and independent judgment for personal reasons. The consequence of this will be that a large number will get on to that list or panel who would be pure creatures of the official classes and not the representatives of the people. Regulations, conditions and restrictions mentioned in the Bill are not most carefully framed. Therefore, what appears on paper to be a list of men chosen by the people will be so in name only; nay, worse, because at present the Indian members are nominated, whereas under the Bill it will be said that they are the representatives of the people, although the selection of the Secretary of State for India might fall on those of the list who may be pure creatures of the official class.

"If the principle of election is to be accepted, why whittle it away by adopting the most circuitous and clumsy methods? By far the simplest way is to form an electorate which is ready-made consisting of all the elected members of the various Councils referred to

in the Bill, and let them elect the Indian representatives by ballot. If there is any fear of any undesirable man being elected, for which I do not think there is the slightest ground, I should be willing, if necessary, to give the Secretary of State for India, who is always an eminent statesman whichever party he belongs to, the power to veto it and direct a fresh election in that particular case; but anything short of this will, I feel sure, not satisfy the people of India. With regard to the other provisions of the Bill, it is not very clear as to what exactly is intended, because in introducing the Bill Lord Crewe did not make any statement; but as far as my reading of the clauses goes, I think there is no desire to create a portfolio system. If this be so, then the alarm that was caused in India last year owing to the pronouncement of Lord Crewe, which lent colour to that impression, will, no doubt, be dispelled.

"However, I think that the other clauses require some further explanation before one can deal with the provisions contained therein, and therefore, I do not propose to say anything about them now, but it is most important to see that proper rules and regulations are framed as contemplated by the Bill."

The Congress delegation returned to India by the end of the year and found an echo of its services in the thanks of the

Congress during the Madras Sessions held in December, 1914.

Since the foundation of the Students' Association in London and his pronouncements regarding the political affairs of India which had already attracted wide-spread attention, Mohammad Ali Jinnah was hailed as a leader of the young Muslims and as early as February, 1915, he had been singled out by the Muslim students of Bombay to inaugurate the Muslim Students' Union—an honour which in itself did justice to the immense service he had rendered to his nation. The incident bears out the fact that he was, even at that time, as much recognised as a Muslim leader as one interested also in the other issues and general welfare of the country. But from this platform also he did not fail to remind his fellow countrymen that the primary aim he had set before him and to which he had devoted his life was to unite the hearts of his peoples—an object which, never before or since, he lost sight of. His speech at the Union on this occasion was not only a lesson to his young followers but it was also an announcement tending a great deal towards self-revelation. He opened his heart to them and appealed to them to be instrumental in furthering the aim of his life. The mere fact, he said, that this Union was formed was a distinct sign of progress so far as the Muslims were concerned. Their constitution was admirable and he

congratulated them on the support they had been able to secure and the results they had so far achieved. But he asked them to remember that though it might be an easy thing to form an association, it was not always easy to work one. He always took the greatest interest in students, and, therefore, when the Secretary asked him to say a few words at this meeting he gladly accepted the invitation. One of the foremost things, however, said he, they had to bear in mind was the value of discipline. If they wanted to make that Union useful, they must go through regular discipline in all they did in connection with it, so that it might be useful to them in the wider life which awaited them when their student days were over.

The second point he wished to emphasise was that if their association was going to be built on a permanent foundation, they must learn to practise self-reliance. Then again one of their chief objects should always be co-operation, unity and good-will, not only among the different sections of the Muslims but also between the Muslims and other communities, and it would be therefore better if they started at the earliest possible opportunity to try to understand the other communities. That would be the surest way of progress in the country, and there were sure signs of this progress. But there was one thing which must be realised by every thinking person as essential. If progress was to be made, it would

not be by dissensions. Unity was absolutely essential to progress. He earnestly appealed to them to do away with dissensions with all their might.

It was also necessary to settle the course of their own progress. The present system of education was not exactly one that led to that road. But notwithstanding all difficulties, he asked them to bear in mind one thing, namely, that every one of them should be a true patriot. They must understand the current affairs of the country. They often heard people saying that they took no interest in politics. Politics had in some quarters assumed a definition that was anything but true. It did not necessarily mean agitation. A man could take interest in politics without participating in agitation. And even if a man did take part in agitation it did not mean that he wanted to pull down the Government. Jinnah never advocated students taking an active part in politics, but he always urged that they must, as early as possible, take an interest in and understand politics. In India politics had become the life-blood of the people and it was, therefore, no use their shutting their eyes to it. In conclusion, he hoped that the students would work their Union in such a manner that its membership would convey the idea of their being refined gentlemen of great principles and convictions, of upright men passionately fond of their country, of men who, when they finished their

student days, would enter upon their wider life with the determination of carrying out those principles and convictions and standing by and following them even at great sacrifice.

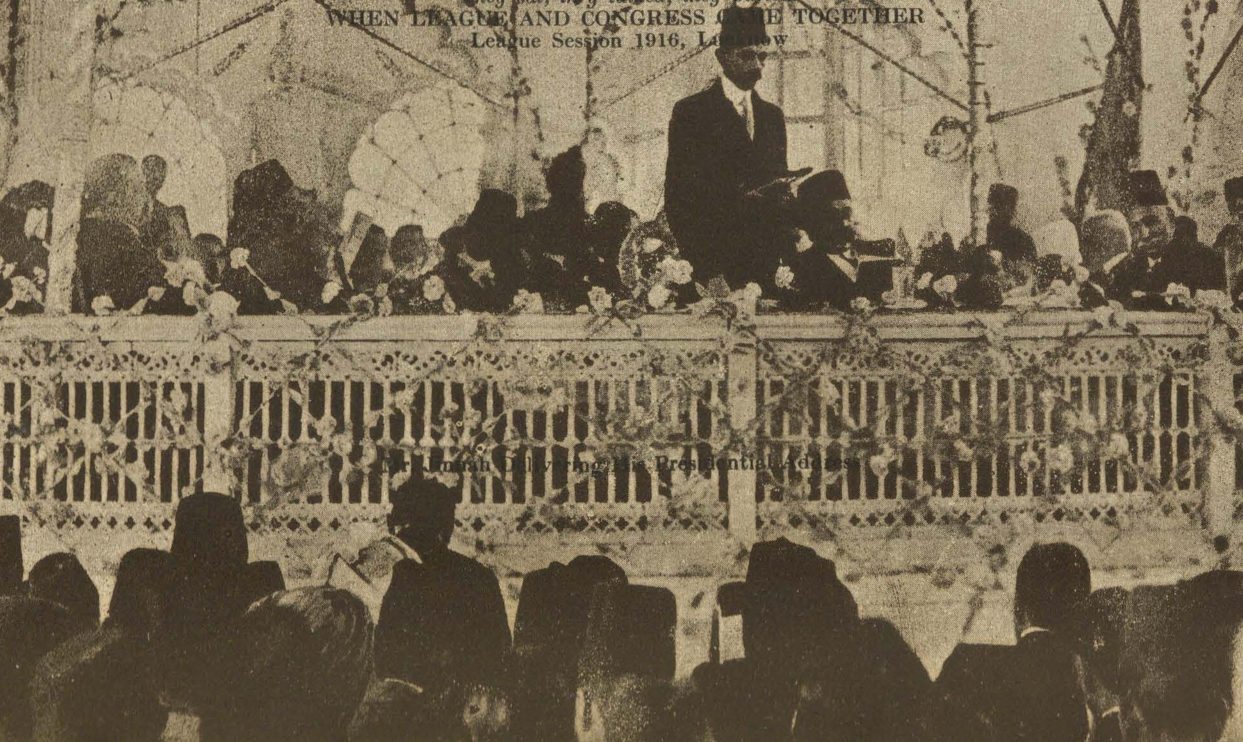
The tragic death of Gokhale in February 1915 left the young leader, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, all alone. It was a personal loss of a leader, a teacher and a guide. To what extent he derived the inspiration from Gokhale is evident from the speech that he delivered on the occasion of a public meeting held in Bombay to raise a memorial to commemorate the life and work of Gokhale. Jinnah said Gokhale was a great man, respected by the Muslims as much as by the Hindus and trusted by both. Gokhale was a fearless critic and opponent of the measures of the Government which he thought were not in the interest of the peoples of India. He criticised freely the administration of the country where it affected adversely the Indian peoples. But in all his decisions and utterances, Gokhale was guided by reason and true moderation. He was not an idealist but one who had the courage to face facts. He was, therefore, a help to the Government and a source of great strength to his people. One of the greatest lessons, said Jinnah, that his life taught was the example that he set before the world as to how much a single man could be capable of doing, how powerfully and materially he could help and guide the destinies of his country and of his

people, and how millions could derive from him true lead and inspiration. To him, said he, it was always a matter of pride and pleasure to listen to Gokhale and often follow his lead. He commanded the respect of every one—officials and non-officials. With this tribute to the departed colleague and honouring him with an acknowledgment of leadership, M. A. Jinnah assured Gokhale's relatives of his deepest and fullest sympathies.

And ever since then the lesson that Gokhale taught him never went unheeded. Ever since then the path shown by the revered leader has never been abandoned. Ever since then the persistence with which Gokhale pursued his efforts for the amelioration of his people has never been lost sight of. Truth must ultimately prevail. Faithfulness to the cause must be rewarded. Temptations and allurements for an immediate glory must be disregarded for the sake of wider and broader issues and nobler ideas. Individual conveniences must be sacrificed for the general good. These are the mottoes of his life, the principles which guide all his actions. These are the qualities which always form a halo round his head, not denied even by his severest critics.

" Honesty without humbug—an honesty which even his severest critics have never called in question," says Nawabzada Liaqat Ali Khan, " an honesty which seeks no shelter in sanctimonious spiritual impediments, which

abjures alike the halo and the high place, the beard and the bargain, the mystic voice and the money value—an unemotional shrewdness which strips facts down to their naked reality, but makes him pace the floor till the early hours of the morning examining and re-examining, weighing and valuing each detail of the decision upon which the very life or death of his people might depend—perseverance which recognises no obstacle as insurmountable; intellectual acumen which can see the whole in detail as part of the whole—such is the man and statesman, the Qaid-i-Azam of ninety million Indian Muslims, the Disraeli of Indian politics—Mohammad Ali Jinnah."



WHEN LEAGUE AND CONGRESS CAME TOGETHER

League Session 1916, Lucknow

Mr. Jinnah Delivering His Presidential Address

CHAPTER VII

THE AMBASSADOR OF UNITY

In July, 1914, the Great War broke out and while Germany was knocking at the doors of France, the Indian troops sent to the front by Lord Hardinge had proved to be a great asset to the Allied power. While, therefore, the services of the Indian soldiery were being appreciated by the rulers, the ruled, at home, feeling proud of the help they had given, were asking for more concessions and higher status. Both the Congress and the Muslim League were vocal in demanding the fulfilment of their ideals, which embodied practically the same principle. The one blessing that the Great War of 1914 brought to India was that it facilitated the work of those who had taken to heart, and were constantly busy in fermenting that essential union of purpose and singleness of ideal between the conflicting sections of Indian public opinion, which is necessary for all concerted action.

The difference of opinion between the Extremists—who now styled themselves as "Nationalists"—and Moderates, within the fold of the Congress, had not been made up. Mrs. Annie Besant and Mr. Subha Rao were active in reconciling the two groups. But

Tilak's stiff attitude towards this move and his determination to have his own way would not, however, let them proceed in the matter with any success. Muslim League politics also were not satisfactory. Maulana Mohammad Ali, Maulana Shaukat Ali, Maulana Zafar Ali Khan and Maulana Abul Kalam Azad were voicing at the time the feelings of Muslim India against the British Government regarding the international question, which Turkey's intervention in the war on the side of Germany had raised. But while these leaders were not willing to compromise the issue of the international situation on any ground, others were busy demanding the reform of the internal conditions of Indian politics. While the extremists —both Hindus and Muslims—remained indifferent, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, once more, made an attempt to bring the two mighty organisations, the Congress and the League, together. His efforts in this direction had already been fruitful to a considerable extent. The success that he met at the Karachi sessions of the Congress and the Agra sessions of the League gave him much courage. This year the Congress was to hold the sessions at Bombay. Jinnah, supported by all the leading local Muslims, sent an invitation to the All-India Muslim League to hold its annual sessions at the same place and during the same time. It was a unique idea unknown in the history of Indian patriotism, enough to shake the foundations of suspicious officialdom. In an hour of

such grave and bitter crisis, as Mrs. Naidu points out, calculated to shatter the master-dream of Indian nationalism, this dauntless soldier of unity rose to the heights of invincible patriotism. With a proud and splendid indifference to all personal suffering and sacrifice, heedless alike of official dissuasion or disfavour, the aggressive malice and machinations of his opponents or even the temporary injustice of distant friends, Mohammad Ali Jinnah strove with incomparable devotion and courage to create that supreme moment in our national history, which would witness the birth of a new India, redeemed and victorious in the love of her united children.

Simultaneously, however, there were other forces working against this stalwart of unity. There were at the time two distinct groups against the Bombay sessions of the League. One maintained that the promoters of the idea wanted to merge the League into the Congress and that co-operation with the Congress at the moment would mean the alliance with an anti-British element which would be harmful to the larger issues of Muslim politics and against the principle of loyalty and fidelity to the British Crown to which Musalmans were committed. The other was against holding the annual sessions altogether on the ground that owing to the undesirable turn of events of the War due to Turkey's participation against the Allies, it would be impolitic to

express any sentiments from the public platform as it would necessarily encourage anti-British feeling, since Indian Muslims were bound with the Turkish people by a tie of faith. The argument continued to be advanced even after the League Council decided to hold the sessions in Bombay. To counteract the propaganda which was backed by official support, Jinnah issued an appeal to Muslim leaders on the 11th of November, 1915, as follows :—

" Now that the Council of the All-India Muslim League has decided to hold the sessions of the League in Bombay, may I appeal to Muslim leaders in general to close our ranks ? We are bound by our constitution. Reverence for and obedience to that constitution and discipline are absolutely necessary qualities to enable us to say that we are fit for real political franchise, freedom and self-government.

" At this juncture we are watched not only by India but by the whole of the British Empire of which we aspire to be an independent, free and equal member along with the Dominions who already enjoy freedom and self-government. No consideration of any kind or nature whatsoever should weigh with us or influence us except the best interests of the country and the community. The Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League both have for their goal the attainment of self-government for India. The recognition

of this claim will have to be judged—and will depend greatly upon how the Congress and the League organise, control and conduct themselves this year and in the near future.

"I wish to state with the greatest emphasis that there is no truth in the baseless statements made in some quarters that any responsible Muslim leader thinks that the League should be merged into the Indian National Congress. But conference, in collaboration, if possible, is the object and what objection is there to this course?

"Now that the majority of the leading representatives of the Council have decided on holding the sessions in Bombay, can we not bury our differences, show a united front and acquit ourselves with credit and honour? What will the success of the sessions of the League this year mean?

"1. It will show the power of organisation, the solidarity of Muslim opinion and their true worth. This will entitle them to claim the rights and privileges of a free people.

"2. It will make our Hindu friends value us all the more and will make them feel more than ever that we are worthy of standing shoulder to shoulder with them for the cause and the motherland.

"3. It will prove to British politicians and statesmen, to Parliament and the British

nation generally, that we are not crying for the moon when we ask for self-government but that we are determined and are in earnest about it and that we shall pursue our course steadfastly and unitedly till the goal is realised.

"4. It will convince the Government here and in England and the British Empire at large that the Muslims of India, notwithstanding their religious sentiments and feelings at this juncture of the greatest crisis that the Empire has to face, can show due control, restraint and moderation in their deliberations and can exercise judgment and pursue a course which is worthy of the highest statesmanship.

"In conclusion, I urge all the Muslims to rally round the flag of the the All-India Muslim League and as true patriots stand by its constitution and thus make the community feel proud of the only political organisation it possesses at present."

But the opponents were determined on rowdyism. A few of them were already present in the League pandal, accompanied by a number of police officers who had occupied the visitors' gallery. A police force was also waiting outside to intervene at the time of emergency. The proceedings of the first day of the sessions began with the prominent Congress leaders—S. P. Sinha, D. E. Wacha, Surendra Nath Bannerji, Parbhashankar D. Pattani, Mrs. Annie Besant, Mrs. Sarojini

Naidu, Madan Mohan Malaviya, M.K. Gandhi, B.G. Horniman and R.N. Madholkar—as guests, and after Maulana Mazharul Haq, the President, read out his address, the League rose for the day, after having condoled the death of the departed leaders.

On the second day the malcontents found an excuse to create disorder, when Mohammad Ali Jinnah rose to move a resolution for the appointment of a committee in order to formulate India's political demands in consultation with the Congress leaders. An ordinary interpellation between the President and Maulana Hasrat Mohani was the scene of an uproar. A confusion followed and the official peace-makers came to the forefront to handle the unruly mob. The President finding it difficult to proceed with the business further adjourned the meeting and the rest of the proceedings were conducted in the Taj Mahal Hotel.

Here Mohammad Ali Jinnah moved a resolution that a committee be appointed with a view to prepare a scheme of reforms for the consideration of the British Government, and that it should be authorised to consult and confer with other political organisations. It was made clear that due regard should be paid to the needs and interests of the Musalmans. Jinnah said that he wanted the committee to draft proposals in consultation with other elements of the country's national

life in order that he might take them to the British Government as something agreed to both by the Muslim League and the Congress and something embodying the demands of a united India. As a result of the resolution a representative committee was appointed to perform the functions assigned to it.

Such was the cordiality in the atmosphere of leadership that Maulana Mohammad Ali humorously remarked: " So rapid had been the progress of the Musalmans that a mildewed critic from among their own community observed that Lord Sinha, the Bengali President of the Bombay Session of the Indian National Congress, had travelled thither by the same train as his Bihari neighbour and brother-lawyer who presided over the Muslim League, and the two had borrowed one another's Presidential Addresses in order to compare notes. By some unfortunate mistake, Lord Sinha read out the halting and hesitating address of the ever loyal Muslim while the ever loyal Muslim read out the piquant and pungent address of the ever disloyal Bengali. But, said the critic with more wit than wisdom, the two Presidents forgot to take back their own productions, and by an irony of fate Maulana Mazharul Haq had read to his Muslim audience as his own the pungent oration characteristic of the Bengali, and Lord Sinha had done likewise and read to the Congress delegates the cautious and halting address of the 'ever loyal' Muslim."*

*Noman: *Muslim India.*

The League gesture produced the desired effect on the Hindu mind. The friendly atmosphere had to be availed of to the best advantage. A serious issue was in the offing. The League was prepared to undertake discussions and Hindu opinion was needed to be galvanised. M. K. Gandhi who had returned to India from South Africa, was busy in his own sphere reclaiming the extremists back into the folds of the Congress, and eventually succeeded where Mrs. Besant and Subha Rao had failed. One achievement of the Bombay sessions of the Congress was, says Pittabi Sitaramayya, that the constitution of the Congress was suitably altered so as to throw the doors of entry practically open to the ingress of the "Nationalist" delegates who were allowed to be elected by "public meetings convened under the auspices of any association which is of not less than two years standing on 31st December, 1915, and which has for one of its objects the attainment of self-government within the British Empire by constitutional means," and this was allowed by a hearty response from Tilak who forthwith publicly announced the willingness of his party to re-enter the Congress through the partially opened door.*

"We heard," says Mr. Indulal K. Yajnik, "that Mr. Gandhi helped in bringing about

History of the Congress.

this settlement. But on the whole his contribution to the proceedings of this important session may be deemed thoroughly insignificant."*

Thus did Gandhi, a rising star, cast his first shadow on the political horizon of " Nationalist India ".

The All-India National Congress also reciprocated the League gesture by authorising the All-India Congress Committee to confer with the League Executive and frame a scheme for self-government. Consequently discussions were initiated in April, 1916, at Allahabad, at the meeting of the Congress Committee, and the tentative proposals formulated by that body were considered at a joint meeting of the Congress Committee and the League Council in October at Calcutta.

In the autumn of 1916 Mohammad Ali Jinnah was once again elected by the Musalmans of his province to the Imperial Legislative Council, where he still commanded "unanimous respect and esteem by his personal dignity of character and his fearless and vigilant championship of Indian rights and demands." His election to the Council afforded him one more opportunity to throw his weight on the inner circle of politicians. Not content with his outdoor efforts to bring the Congress and the League together he began to

Gandhi As I Know Him.

work on similar lines among the members of the Legislature. A memorandum was sent by nineteen members of the Council to the Viceroy in October, 1916, for post-war reforms. Mohammad Ali Jinnah was one of the signatories.*

The triple role that this great leader played as a member of the League as well as that of the Congress and the Imperial Legislature is unique in the life of a political leader, unknown in the history of national India.

In the month of October, 1916, Mohammad Ali Jinnah was requested to preside over the sixteenth Bombay Provincial Conference held in Ahmedabad—a fact which was in itself a grateful acknowledgment of his signal services to his peoples. His presidential address is a document of facts and a thesis on practical politics. At a time, which is regarded in Jinnah's life a memorable page, when he was considered the very embodiment of love and tolerance, the very symbol of true nationalism, he had the courage to express his true feelings and his clear-cut views regarding the Muslim attitude on democratic India, before a gathering which was perhaps predominantly Hindu.†

"Two questions," he said, "above all are uppermost in our thoughts and are en-

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*See Appendix I.
†See Appendix II.

grossing our minds at the present moment—the War and what is going to happen after the successful termination of this titanic struggle that has overshadowed the entire civilised world. India has stood faithful and loyal to the British Empire from the very commencement; she has poured out her treasures and shed the blood of some of her noblest sons on the battlefields of Flanders, Africa, Egypt and Mesopotamia for the defence of the Empire. It may be said once for all that the people of India are proud to be a part of the British Empire and that their loyalty is as true and firm as that of any other Britisher in any part of the Empire. But she wishes no longer to continue as the subject race, or, to put in the words of Lord Hardinge, "the trusty dependent," but claims to be an equal partner with the other members of the Empire." Jinnah then dealt with the various aspects of administration, representation of Indians in the services and suggested ways and means as to how evils could be eradicated and co-operation of the Indian population could be secured for better government. But the main burden of his address was the need of unity.

"Now I come," said he, "to the all-absorbing question which stirred India because of the declaration of the *Entente Cordiale* between the Hindus and Muslims made in the city of Bombay last Christmas. I believe all thinking men are thoroughly convinced that

the key-note of our real progress lies in the good-will, concord, harmony and co-operation between the two great sister communities. The true focus of progress is centred in their union, and remember this is a matter which is entirely in our own hands."

Who would, therefore, be responsible for the breach of unity if not we ourselves? Were we prepared to take things as they stood? Were we really viewing things with a dispassionate outlook? Were we taking a broad view of the situation? These were the questions that lay before Jinnah, and he proceeded to answer them.

"There is but one question," he pointed out, "beside the question of cow-killing and street music, which has proved not only a thorny question but an obstacle which has kept the two communities hitherto apart. But the solution is not difficult. It requires a true spirit of conciliation and give and take. The Muslims want proper, adequate and effective representation in the Council chambers of the country and in the District and Municipal Boards, a claim which no right-minded Hindu disputes for a moment. But the Muslims further require that representation in the various Boards and Council chambers should be secured to them by means of separate electorates. This question of separate electorates from top to bottom has been before the country ever since 1909 and

rightly or wrongly the Muslim community is absolutely determined for the present to insist upon separate electorates. To most of us the question is no more open to further discussion or argument as it has become a mandate of the community. As far as I understand, the demand for separate electorates is not a matter of policy but a matter of necessity to the Muslims, who require to be roused from the coma and torpor into which they had fallen so long. I would, therefore, appeal to my Hindu brethren that in the present state of position they should try to win the confidence and the trust of the Muslims who are, after all, in the minority in the country. If they are determined to have separate electorates, no resistance should be shown to their demands."

The minority question was not as burning then as it became in later years of our national life. But the views expressed by this future champion of the rights and interests of minorities still hold good in all their freshness and applicability. At the time, however, the question was not of party politics but that of the general welfare. "One thing is, however, clear," said he. "It is not a question of a few more seats going to the Muslims, or the Hindus. It is a question, as I have already pointed out, in the first instance, of transfer of power from the bureaucracy to democracy. Let us concentrate all our attention and energy on this question alone for the moment. The

Hindus and the Musalmans should stand united and use every constitutional and legitimate means to effect that transfer as soon as possible...In conclusion, let me tell you that, after all, a great deal depends upon ourselves. Hindus and Musalmans united and firm, the voice of the three hundred millions of people vibrating throughout the length and breadth of the country, will produce a force which no power on earth can resist. India has, I believe, turned a corner. She has passed through great sufferings and borne them patiently for centuries. There is now a bright and a great future in front of her. We are now on a straight road; the Promised Land is within sight."

It is an irony of fate that such a clear exposition of the national outlook, which went a long way to create a memorable harmony of thought and action among the conflicting opinions of Indian public life, initiated and sponsored by the sole efforts of this one man, still going unmatched in India's political history, should be set aside and the lessons therefrom should be forgotten in such a short time. What were the causes of this effect will be best shown by a glance at coming events. The speech, among other things, illustrates the trend of events to which India was subjected at the time. It is in a way characteristic of the period in which it was delivered. It also marks the views of this

rising hero of Muslim politics about the vital issues which had always faced us. Rightly or wrongly the Muslims, he said, had decided to insist upon separate electorates, and although he himself did not believe in the principle, he had decided that he should not proceed against it any more. This was also the view-point of every thoughtful Hindu. It had become a dead issue and had to be faced as it stood. There lay the keynote to success and to the spirit of compromise and comradeship to which he contributed a great deal himself.

The scheme of reforms thrashed out by the League and the Congress jointly had to be referred to the annual sessions of the two great organisations which were to meet once again in the same city and at the same time, at Lucknow in December, 1916.

The Lucknow Sessions of the Congress, as pointed out by Sitaramayya in his *History of the Congress*, was altogether a unique one for the formulation of a scheme of self-government. Not less important was the reunion of the two wings of the Congress which had been separated since 1907. It was truly an enlivening spectacle to see Tilak and Khaparde sitting side by side with Dr. Rash Behari Ghose and Surendranath Banerjea. Mrs. Besant was there with her two coadjutors—Arundale and Wadia—and the banner of



THE BIG GUNS
LEAGUE SESSION 1916, LUCKNOW

Home Rule in their hands. Amongst the Muslims were men like the Raja of Mahmudabad, Mazharul Haq, A. Rasul and Jinnah. Gandhi and Polak were there too.

The League sessions met under the presidentship of Mohammad Ali Jinnah, who by now had become the champion of the interests of Muslims, as well as a hero of all India. His presidential address, as was usual with all his public utterances, was marked by passionate devotion to the cause of Hindu-Muslim settlement, with a frank analysis of the public mind and public opinion and with fervent appeals both to the Hindus and to the Muslims to take counsel with higher ideals and nobler sentiments.*

At the same time, however, true to the dictates of duty and conscious of the grave responsibilities he had accepted as President of the august Muslim organisation he did not fail to echo the feelings of those over whose deliberations he was presiding, and which he had taken good care to elicit and examine dispassionately beforehand.

" If it were possible to isolate the tangled group of social and political phenomena," he declared, " and subject it to a thorough investigation by reason, unalloyed by sentiment, it would be infinitely easier to find a

*See Appendix III.

safe and sure path for Indian political development and advance. But, as you know, pure, unalloyed reason is not the chief motive power in human things. In the affairs of our common secular existence, we have to deal not with angels but with men, with passions, prejudices, personal idiosyncrasies, innumerable cross-current of motive, of desire, hope, fear and hate. The Indian problem has all such formidable complications in its texture... Again, if we turn to the internal situation in India, we meet with a set of social, ethnological and cultural conditions unparalleled in recorded history. We have a vast continent inhabited by 315 millions of peoples sprung from various racial stocks, inheriting various cultures and professing a variety of religious creeds. This stupendous human group thrown together under one physical and political environment, is still in the various stages of intellectual and moral growth. All this means a great diversity of outlook, purpose and endeavour. Every Indian Nationalist who has given close and anxious thought to the problem of nation-building in India, fully realises the magnitude of his task. He is not afraid of admitting frankly that difficulties exist in his path. Such difficulties have no terrors for him. They are already vanishing before the forces which are developing in the new spirit."

He recognised the various forces—conflicting forces—that existed in the body-politic

of India. He acknowledged the innumerable interests that every true lover of unity had to face. But, nevertheless, he was one of those who did not get disheartened by small obstacles and hindrances. From the Muslim platform Jinnah, for the first time, made the emphatic declaration that "amid the clash of warring interests and the noise of foolish catchwords, no cool-headed student of Indian affairs can lose sight of the great obvious truism that India is, in the first and the last resort, for the Indians." And explaining the Muslim attitude towards the Indian constitutional problem and the place of Muslims in the future India the President of the League pronounced his word: "We want no favours, and crave for no partial treatment. That is demoralising to the community and injurious to the State. The Musalmans must learn to have self-respect. What we want is a healthy and fair impetus to be given to our aspirations and ideals as a community and it is the most sacred duty of the Government to respond to that claim. Towards the Hindus our attitude should be of goodwill and brotherly feelings. Co-operation in the cause of our motherland should be our guiding principle. India's real progress can only be achieved by a true understanding and harmonious relations between the two great sister communities. With regard to our own affairs, we can depend upon nobody but ourselves."

The Lucknow sessions of the Indian

National Congress and the All-India Muslim League ended with the Congress-League agreement passed down to history as the Lucknow Pact, which was submitted later to the British Government for consideration.*

What difference there is between Jinnah the "nationalist" of 1916 and Jinnah the "rank communalist" of today one fails to understand. What changes the outlook of this great man towards the position of his Muslim countrymen has undergone is hard to see. Ever since his public career he maintained that Musalmans are a separate entity. Ever since he believed that they should depend ultimately upon their own inherent strength—principles which even today form the main burden of his policy. The learned author of *Men and Supermen of Hindustan* quotes Lord Sankey who is supposed to have reminded the Muslim leader that he had climbed down from the broader "nationalist" platform to the narrower "communal" platform. Let the learned author commend to himself the broadening of his own vision and study and he would not be dwelling in the same darkness where Lord Sankey found himself. Let us also not forget that the very fact that books like *Men and Supermen of Hindustan* and *Tragedy of Jinnah* were written and published, hardly justifies the claim that India is a single nation, and that the economic structure of India recognises no sectional interests.

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*See Appendix IV.

CHAPTER VIII

THE HOME RULE

About the beginning of the year 1917, Mrs. Annie Besant started a new propaganda under the cry of " Home Rule." She started in Madras a Home Rule League with the late Dr. Subramaniya Iyer, a retired Judge of the High Court, as President, and in the course of a few weeks all the Theosophical organisations controlled by Mrs. Besant took up the idea very warmly and helped to establish branches of the Home Rule League all over the country. The powerful publicity campaign conducted by Mrs. Besant through her papers—*New India*, a daily, and *Commonweal*, a weekly—enabled the movement to reach the farthest corners of the country. Mrs. Besant earnestly advocated the cause of India's freedom and went to such extremes that the Government of Lord Chelmsford were obliged to yield to the pressure of local Government of Madras and interned her along with her two associates—G. S. Arundale and B. P. Wadia. As soon as Mrs. Besant was interned, a violent agitation was set afoot to get her out of her internment on the one hand and to convert the Home Rule propaganda into what looked like a bitter anti-British agitation, on the other. Public indignation rose so high in the matter that it was decided

to elect her as the President of the Calcutta sessions of the Indian National Congress, and in view of her absence under Government custody, it was seriously proposed to keep the presidential chair vacant and conduct the proceedings of the sessions through a deputy.*

The election of the President, once over again, inaugurated party factions within the Congress. The Bengal Congressmen fell out amongst themselves and men like C. R. Das openly joined the extreme party to widen the gulf. In the meantime Mrs. Besant was released and was acclaimed President by the unanimous vote of all the Provincial Congress Committees. "This was the starting point," P. C. Ray points out, "of the creation of a new party in India, which very soon developed as the Moderate and, later, as the Liberal Party, and this was also the first Congress at which the elder statesmen of the country lost their control over deliberations."

For Mohammad Ali Jinnah also the year 1917 was one of great deal of anxiety and activity. As early as the month of February he had to busy himself, once over again, in his attempt for the realisation of the objects to which he had set his heart. Hitherto he had agitated for the Indianisation of the army and emphasised that opportunities should be given to Indian young men in the same way as were

*P. C. Ray : *Life and Times of C. R. Das.*

given to Europeans. The introduction of the Indian Defence Force Bill in the Legislative Council was a step towards that realisation. Welcoming the Bill, therefore, Jinnah said: "My Lord, I welcome this Bill, and I do so for two or three principal reasons. The first reason, my Lord, that strikes me is this, that after the Mutiny the policy of the Government, as has been pointed out over and over again, was regulated—I am not going into the reasons for it—to a certain extent on grounds of the distrust of the people and this Bill is an indication that that policy, rightly or wrongly pursued, has, from this day, disappeared from this country. The second ground is that it opens a door to a service which was closed to the people of this country except sepoys for all these years under British rule."

He also struck a note of warning against the policy of discrimination. "I ought to tell the Council also in straight language and without mincing matters, that if you want young Indians, if you want educated young Indians to come forward and enlist themselves in the defence of their country, one fact must not be forgotten, and that is the status and privileges, which should be given to them." And added further: "My Lord, this war has shown clearly that the time has come for a policy of trust in the people of India, and this Bill is a precursor of this policy. I assure you, my Lord, that whatever dissatisfaction, what-

ever discontent you may observe, that dissatisfaction and that discontent is not due to disloyalty, but it is due to grievances which ought to be attended to and removed." About the same time he also supported the resolution on Primary Education that came up for discussion before the Imperial Legislative Council, stating emphatically that there was great need for following the principle suggested therein. He demanded the fulfilment of the solemn pledge held out by Sir Harcourt Butler, as Member for Education, five years before.

During his speech on the budget in March 1917, Mohammad Ali Jinnah once again voiced the feelings of those whom he represented in the Council. He insisted upon equal justice for Indians and Europeans in the rank and file of His Majesty's forces. He once more urged that India must discuss the proposed scheme of constitutional reforms before it was finally incorporated in the new Government of India Act. He also expressed India's desire to be adequately represented in the "Imperial Parliament" which at the time was in contemplation. He spoke eloquently on questions like indentured labour and cotton duties.

There was, it must be admitted, a growing sense of surprise and reproach in the minds of his followers that so ardent an apostle of Indian self-government should hold aloof from the recently organised Home Rule movement

which was rousing the country like a clarion call to freedom. It may have been partly due to a lingering sentiment of allegiance to a school of politics in which he had been trained, but whose timid and stationary doctrines he had long since outgrown, or it may have been due to the habitual caution of a nature slow to commit itself to new and far-reaching responsibilities. However, the news of Mrs. Besant's internment in the month of June, which evoked unparalleled demonstrations throughout India, moved Mohammad Ali Jinnah into a prompt and militant course of chivalry in defence of the immutable laws of justice and liberty so rashly and so ruthlessly assailed. He immediately joined the Bombay Home Rule League, not merely as a member but undertook, as its President, the delicate task of guiding its fortunes and guarding its interests through that troubled period of its indignant activities.*

Early in July 1917 a public meeting was held under the joint auspices of the Bombay branches of the Home Rule League, at the Morarji Goculdas Hall, Cavel Street, Bombay, to pass a resolution of confidence in Lord Hardinge, who had made a statement in the House of Lords and had appealed for a verdict on his administration, not only to British public opinion but also to the Indian public. Lord

*Mrs. Sarojini Naidu.

Hardinge had said that India had been " bled white " to help the Allies and that it was India whose help at a most critical moment of the war saved Europe. At this largely attended meeting the honour of presidentship went to Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Addressing the meeting he said he was sure that he conveyed the universal feeling on the part of educated India that Lord Hardinge's appeal had entered deep into the Indian heart. He was sure he was voicing the feelings not only of that meeting but also of the general public that it was due to the fact of there being a statesman of Lord Harding's character and a Viceroy of his calibre who held the confidence of the people of India and who understood the pulse of the public of India, that it had been possible to send the troops to France at the most critical stage of the war ; and it was Lord Hardinge alone that could have achieved what he did then by sending the troops. In his own words, India was "bled white" and submitted to all sacrifices without a murmur at that critical time. Why was it, the speaker asked, that even now India was willing to bleed white without a murmur ? It was because they had had a Viceroy who shared in their sorrows and who shared in their joys, who understood the hearts of the people of India, and who held liberal and generous ideas about their national progress. Such was the atmosphere of the time. Jinnah could not help striking the note that while they had a

Viceroy like Lord Hardinge at that juncture and that while India was in the same frame of mind as ever, and was ready to make any sacrifice that she might be called upon to make for the British Empire, still it was an unfortunate thing that a policy of repression was being pursued in various provinces. It was unfortunate that not only a policy of repression was pronounced and carried out by the different provincial pro-consuls but also it was still more regrettable that the then Viceroy was maintaining a studied silence when India was stirred to its very depths. He hoped these humble words of his would penetrate the cloudy regions of Simla and reach the ears of the Viceroy who should understand that India was really true and loyal to the Empire. India's faith was still strong.

Within a month, however, things had considerably changed. It was felt that an emphatic protest against the policy of the Government should be made. Public indignation was at its height. A crowded mass meeting was held under the auspices of the Bombay Presidency Association on the 30th July and Hon'ble M. A. Jinnah was again made its spokesman.

"Ladies and gentlemen!" he said, "it seems obvious that if we accept the policy of the Government, all constitutional and lawful agitation will, in effect, be stopped, that the freedom of speech and the Press and the right

of public meeting under the British flag is henceforth to be regulated by the arbitrary judgment and decision of a Provincial Government or Governor, that the Executive are to decide what is lawful and constitutional propaganda without reference to the Courts of Justice of His Majesty the King-Emperor. Is this the aim and object of those who are responsible for the actions of the Provincial Government? It is said that we are to put out of our thoughts entirely the early grant of self-government to India; that we are not going to get anything like the reforms formulated and sanctioned by the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League, last December at Lucknow, to be given effect to at the close of the War; that we must be content with small minor reforms which the bureaucracy have recommended, though we are not yet even accorded the small mercy of knowing what they are; that we are not to raise expectations in the minds of the people which are not going to be fulfilled. We are threatened with Government action if we do not obey these warnings—and as an earnest thereof Mrs. Besant and her co-workers are interned—any expression of public opinion recording disapproval of the Government action is not desired."

In Bengal, the speaker pointed out, and also in Delhi, public meetings had been stopped already. Now why was India alone of all

other parts of the Empire, to be marked out for silence, and why should the Indian people have been subjected to that repressive policy? They were shedding their blood and pouring their money ungrudgingly and unstintingly for the defence of the Empire in that war the very basis of which was to preserve the liberty and freedom of people of various countries. Was the bureaucracy of India blind? Had they lost their reason to treat loyal India at that juncture in that manner? It was a mistake. It showed an utter want of wisdom and statesmanship. What was His Excellency the Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford, doing? His silence at that moment was most ominous and worse than the most drastic repressive actions already adopted and enforced by some of the Provincial Governments. "We protest against the internment of Mrs. Besant and her co-workers," Jinnah declared, "not only on principle but also because it is an attempt to intern the Home Rule or self-government scheme of reforms framed and adopted conjointly by the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League at Lucknow. We declare that we stand by that scheme unswervingly and unflinchingly, and we shall do all that lies in our power for its realisation at the close of the war. We protest against the methods adopted and attempts that are made to silence the people of India from carrying on their constitutional agitation. We feel that Government are blind to the real public opinion in the country regarding

the Reform Scheme passed at Lucknow ; and are entirely misled and pursuing a policy which is fraught with most serious consequences. It has already led the people to earnestly consider whether they should not adopt the principle and methods of passive resistance."

The current political situation was unprecedented and most unfortunate ; it had cast the gravest responsibility upon the leaders, the people and the Government alike, which required the most careful and immediate attention of all. Times were different and changed. The people of India required at once a clear and definite enunciation of the policy of the Government. They required that the confidence of the people in the Government which had been so severely shaken within the past three months should be restored at once in order to enable them to hasten the winning of the war, which had been their first and foremost consideration throughout that long long and weary struggle, which had been going on for nearly three years. The people of India were anxious to help in the progress of their country and were earnestly endeavouring to attain the status of a self-governing member of the Empire at an early date ; but it was really folly to think that because of that they were not loyal to the Empire. Jinnah hoped that statesmen of the calibre of the Prime Minister, Lloyd George, and the Secretary of State for India, Montagu, who were at the

helm of affairs would not allow the situation to assume a still more serious character. "In the belief and faith that British statesmanship has not come to the point of utter bankruptcy, I appeal to it on behalf of this meeting that they should not lose any time in making a declaration of policy for making India a self-governing member of the British Empire at an early date, and order the reversal of the recent repressive policy, in response to the public opinion which is unequivocal and emphatic throughout the country."

At this time some workers were planning a campaign of passive resistance in order to secure the release of the Home Rule internees. A joint meeting of the All-India Congress Committee and the Council of the All-India Muslim League met on the 28th of July 1917 to consider the various aspects of the Indian political situation. A small deputation consisting of four persons was appointed, at the instance of Sir William Wedderburn, to proceed to England in the middle of September, in order to explain the general political situation in India and to promote the scheme of reforms adopted by the two great organisations. As regards passive resistance it was considered desirable that the matter be referred to the Provincial Congress Committees and the Muslim League in order to elicit their opinion both in matters of principle and of its operation within a period of six

weeks. The joint meeting also registered its emphatic protest against the policy of repression followed by the Government and drafted out a statement on the political situation, protesting against officials like the Viceroy, some of the Governors and a few of the British statesmen trying to misrepresent and misinterpret the principles of the memorandum of the nineteen members of the Imperial Legislative Council. The main portions of the lengthy statement were cabled to the Secretary of State, the Prime Minister and Sir William Wedderburn on the 30th July, and Sir William in reply cabled: "Had interview with Secretary of State; I feel justified in urging you earnestly to exercise patience. Will telegraph further when situation becomes clearer."

In the conduct of the Great War, the Mesopotamian campaign was mismanaged and a debate took place in the House of Commons, during which Austen Chamberlain, the Secretary of State, was mercilessly criticised by Montagu for the muddle which had resulted from an inadequate supply of men and materials from India. Montagu attacked the Indian Government as "far too wooden, far too iron, far too inelastic and far too antediluvian to subserve its purpose in modern times." The result was Chamberlain's resignation and Montagu's appointment as the Secretary of State for India, an appointment which was regarded as a victory for India, for

Montagu was believed to be statesman possessing goodwill, ability, courage and first-hand knowledge of India. After assuming office and true to public expectation, he made the following announcement in Parliament, on the 20th of August 1917:

"The policy of His Majesty's Government, with which the Government of India are in complete accord, is that of the increasing association of Indians in every branch of the Administration, and the gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible government in India as an integral part of the British Empire. They have decided that as soon as possible, substantial steps in this direction shall be taken and that it is of the highest importance as a preliminary to considering what these steps should be, that there should be a free and informal exchange of opinion between those in authority at home and in India. His Majesty's Government have accordingly decided, with His Majesty's approval, that I should accept the Viceroy's invitation to proceed to India and to discuss these matters with the Viceroy and the Government of India, to consider with the Viceroy the views of Local Governments, and to receive with him the suggestions of representative bodies and others ...I would add that progress in this policy can only be achieved by successive stages. The British Government and the Government of

India, on whom the responsibility lies for the welfare and advancement of the Indian peoples, must be judges of the time and measure of each advance, and they must be guided by the co-operation received from those upon whom new opportunities of service will thus be conferred, and by the extent to which it is found that confidence can be reposed in their sense of responsibility...Ample opportunity will be afforded for discussions of the proposals, which will be submitted in due course to Parliament."

The announcement of Montagu was indeed very well received. For Jinnah, particularly, it was something of a great triumph. He had seen in it a ray of hope which would be of great benefit to India. After the success of his labours for the union of the two great elements in Indian national life, the only task now left to be performed was to bring about a union between the rulers and ruled. The news that Montagu had accepted the invitation of the Viceroy to come out to India foreshadowed such a settlement. Interviewed by the press representatives in this connection Mohammad Ali Jinnah issued the following statement:

"The selection of Mr. Montagu to be the Secretary of State for India has given, as was but natural, the people of this country great satisfaction, and the Prime Minister deserves our best thanks for his choice at the

present critical juncture. Mr. Montagu knows India already and we are sure of his sympathies for our ideals and aspirations, although India of today is greatly changed. This pronouncement which is understood in India as recognising the aspirations of the Indian people of the early grant of self-government within the Empire, is most welcome and his decision, whatever may be the causes that led to it, namely, to come to India and examine and ascertain the present political situation, is no doubt received with great approval. But in order to ensure the success of his mission before Mr. Montagu sets to work at his task, there should be, in my opinion, a general amnesty declared and all those interned as political prisoners released, and I hope that Lord Chelmsford, at whose invitation the Secretary of State for India is coming to this country, will respond to the public feeling and sentiment on this matter, which is very strong indeed. The internment of Mrs. Basant is universally resented not only on principle but because it is understood in view of the pronouncements of the heads of Provincial administrations to be direct blow to the general national movement in this country, and this was the cause that led the people to consider the question of passive resistance.

"Repression with one hand and concessions with the other is a policy which no self-respecting people can accept. We are

determined to stand by the principles of the memorandum of the 19 members of the Council, and the reform scheme of the Congress and the Muslim League, and I would urge upon the leaders and every organisation and the people at large in the country, to lose no time in properly organising, so as to be ready when Mr. Montagu comes here, to place the real situation before him, and to be able to do so we must set to work at once.

"I notice that already interested parties are setting up people against the Home Rule League, which is being misrepresented as going beyond the demand of the Congress and the League. As President of the Bombay Home Rule League I can but repeat that all that we want and all that the entire organisation of ours is devoted to, is the realisation of the scheme of reforms adopted at Lucknow, with this difference that the Home Rule League is an educationist propaganda and the Congress is a mere deliberative body. I feel sure that the Musalmans and the Hindus will stand together on this matter, and I trust that whatever intrigues might be set up by interested parties to detach any section of the landed aristrocracy or the Hindus or Muslims are doomed to failure.

"Personally, I appreciate fully some of the questions affecting the ruling chiefs of India, and I am sure that they feel for India as much as any one of us, as was clearly demon-

strated by the speeches at the historic send-off that was given to the Maharaja of Bikanir at Bombay by the ruling chiefs, prior to his departure to England as a representative at the Imperial War Conference. But the question of British India and its administration should not be allowed to be mixed up with that of the Native States."

Inside the Legislature also Mohammad Ali Jinnah lent his support to measures which contemplated a definite advance towards the betterment of the Indian administration, law and order and towards political progress. Among his many speeches in the Imperial Legislative Council at the time the following extract from his speech delivered on the 21st of September, in connection with the question of simultaneous examinations for the Indian Civil Service in India and England, is characteristic not only of the kind of service that this great man was rendering to his country and his people but also of the style, vigour and fervour with which he pursued his argument and drove home his point of view, the sincere devotion which followed his conviction of a principle and the remarkable courage with which he faced his opponents and their arguments.

"Now the first difficulty," he pointed out, "which the Hon. Member (*Sir William Vincent*) puts forward is that it (resolution before the House) would certainly not maintain

the preponderance of the British element. Now, sir, may I know why is it necessary to have a preponderance of the British element? Why? If, as we are contemplating, we are not going to have, I hope, for a very long time a bureaucracy that will be the servants of the people, and that is what we are aiming at, and if our hopes are realised in the reconstruction of the Government, we hope that the bureaucracy which under the present constitution are the masters and the rulers, will be the servants responsible to the people and under the control of the people. If that is to be realised, may I, sir, know why there should be a substantial element of the British? We want a Service, we want men who will serve us, who will discharge their duties efficiently and faithfully to the Government. I have always failed to understand this argument.

"The Hon. Member said: 'Well, now, supposing you have to send men to the North-West Frontier, what will be the position? If you have a Brahmin he may be very efficient as a literary man, full of knowledge.' In other words, he conveyed that a Brahmin, if he got into the Civil Service, would be nothing but a bookworm and would not be a man possessing manly qualifications. May I know what the Hon. Member meant? Why should not a Brahmin who has passed the test laid down, any test you like—educational, physical or otherwise,—why should not a

Brahmin, who has passed that test, be put in charge of any Province or any District? Will the Hon. Member explain that? What will happen to the North-West Frontier if he goes there? The Hon. Member says, 'Oh! the man with any property, if he was living there, would at once convert his property into a portable State.' If the Hon. Member is so much afraid of a Brahmin, he may be sure the residents of North-West Frontier will also obey his orders."

There was again a joint session of the All-India Congress Committee and the Council of the Muslim League on the 6th October, at Allahabad, at which there was a general concensus of opinion that the question of passive resistance should be dropped. Mrs. Besant herself disapproved of the idea but the younger men were greatly disappointed at the unexpected termination of an effective programme.

Once at Allahabad, Jinnah was called upon to make a pronouncement of his policy as a member of the Home Rule League. A meeting held under the auspices of the Allahabad Home Rule League was addressed by him and he advanced the following explanation: "I wish to say why it was that I joined the Home Rule League. When representations were made and resolutions passed year after year by the National Congress, when their demands were pressed last year in that carefully drafted memorandum of the nineteen members

of the Imperial Council, it was said that that was only the demand of a few educated agitators and lawyers, but that the masses were not ready for any such reform. It was to meet that attack which was made in this country as well as in England, it was to remove that misrepresentation that they resolved that there would be an educative propaganda and that they should reach the masses and put the verdict of the masses not only before the bureaucracy but before the democracy of Great Britain and I am happy to find not less than ten thousand persons have come here for the purpose of vindicating their claim, to show that not only a few educated agitators and lawyers but the masses wanted this reform."

In pursuance of the authoritative announcement in Parliament, the Secretary of State, Edwin Samuel Montagu, arrived in India on the 10th of November, 1917, with Lord Donoughmore, Sir William Duke, Bhupendra Nath Basu and Charles Roberts, as colleagues. The mission began its work at Delhi, visiting in turn Calcutta, Madras and Bombay, and receiving deputations from all schools of political thought, and giving interviews to men representing all shades of opinion. It was in constant consultation throughout the enquiry with the members of the Government of India and, on its return to Delhi, a continuous series of conferences began; there were meetings of the Secretary of State and

those associated with him and the Government of India, meetings with all the heads of Provinces ; meetings with a Committee of the Ruling Princes ; meetings of committees to consider the details and frequent private interviews and informal discussions. Mohammad Ali Jinnah also interviewed the Secretary of State and the following is the record of it kept by Montagu in his diary.

" We were face to face now with the real giants of the Indian political world. We had not these dupes and adherents from the Provinces, but we had here a collection of the first-class politicians of the various Provinces. Old Surendranath Banerjea, the veteran from Bengal, read the address, which was beautifully written and beautifully read. There was Mudholkar from the Central Provinces, Jinnah from Bombay, Mazhar-ul-Haq and Hasan Imam from Bihar and Orissa, Gandhi, Mrs. Besant, Kesava Pillai and so on. All the brains of the movement were there. But the difficulty is, as I have so often said, that owing to the thinness with which we have spread education, they have run generations away from the rest of India and whatever might be done in theory, in practice this would be only another and indigenous autocracy...

" They were followed by Jinnah, young, perfectly mannered, impressive looking, armed to the teeth with dialectics, and insistent upon

the whole of his scheme. All its short-comings, all its drawbacks,—the elected members of the Executive Council, the power of the minority to hold up finance—all these were defended as the best makeshifts they could devise short of responsible government. Nothing else would satisfy them. They would rather have nothing if they could not get the whole lot. I was rather tired and I funked him. Chelmsford tried to argue with him, and was tied up into knots. Jinnah is a very clever man, and it is, of course, an outrage that such a man should have no chance of running the affairs of his own country."

The Memorandum of the Nineteen was submitted, the Scheme of Post-War Reforms, as embodied in the Lucknow Pact, had been handed over to the authorities concerned, Montagu's mission had arrived in India, and started its work and a number of leaders had interviewed the Secretary of State. Public opinion had been elicited to a great extent, but the agitation started by some Anglo-Indians and Europeans, both in India and in England, had not yet quietened. Some time back Lord Sydenham had contributed a number of articles to the British Press attacking the Scheme of Reforms and had said that it was an outcome of German manoeuvres and propaganda carried on by agents of the Kaiser who was at war with Great Brtain at the time. Some of the Anglo-Indian newspapers had been

conducting a ceaseless propaganda against the reforms. It was felt that a fitting reply should be given to these men. The branches of the Home Rule League in Bombay called a public meeting consequently, in November 1917, and under the presidentship of their beloved President, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, a discussion was held on the subject—"The Present European Agitation." In his opening speech Jinnah said he could not understand as to what kind of reforms the Anglo-Indians and Europeans want to introduce in this country. He attributed their activities to ignorance and said that these men did not know as to what was contained in the Congress-League Scheme, or else they would not advance such arguments as they did. Referring to Lord Sydenham, Jinnah said: "Lord Sydenham, that reactionary who enjoyed the hospitality of this country and earned a fat salary from the coffers of its exchequer, has been carrying on an agitation which is discreditable to any man. He says 'as soon as the masses, for whom we are the trustees, are fit for self-government, we shall instantly hand over the government to the people.' Well, gentlemen, all I can say is this. When the masses are fit for self-government they will not go to Lord Sydenham for self-government. That is my answer to Lord Sydenham."

Mohammad Ali Jinnah had always been held out as a spokesman of public opinion and

as the hero of public sentiment, because of the remarkable courage with which he expressed public convictions. Asked to give a message to the young men, he said: "My message to the Musalmans is to join hands with your Hindu brethren. My message to the Hindus is to lift your backward brother up. In that spirit let the foundation of the Home Rule League be consecrated and there is nothing for us to fear." This was not only a message but a motto on which he wanted the whole edifice of political action to be built up.

Once again in December 1917, when the sessions of the All-India Muslim League and of the Indian National Congress met in the same city of Calcutta, one finds Mohammad Ali Jinnah playing the unique role of the ambassador of unity, by supporting the important resolutions on the Congress-League Scheme, and self-government in both the organisations as a member of both. His speech at the sessions of the All-India Muslim League is important in view of the present stand that Jinnah has taken up vis-á-vis the Congress policy.

The resolution before the League was as follows:

"(*a*) That the All-India Muslim League records its sense of great satisfaction at the announcement made by His Majesty's

Secretary of State for India, in the House of Commons on the 20th August, 1917, that the policy of His Majesty's Government is "that of increasing the association of Indians in every branch of Administration and gradual development of Responsible Government in India as an integral part of the British Empire.

(*b*) That in redemption of the pledge made in the announcement, "that substantial steps in this direction should be taken as soon as possible," the League strongly urges upon the Government the immediate introduction of a Bill embodying the reforms contained in the Congress-League Scheme of December 1916, as the first step towards the realisation of Responsible Government and fix a time-limit in the Statute itself within which complete Responsible Government should be established in India, provided always that the principle of adequate and effective representation of Muslim community is made a *sine qua non* in any scheme of reforms."

Stressing the need of a time-limit he said that it was the first time in the history of India that a declaration has been made with a promise that the definite goal of British Rule in this country was the establishment of Responsible Government. He insisted on the fixation of the time-limit in the Statute itself because he thought that the matter should not be left to the caprice or the will of the Government, but that it should be placed in their Statute. Referring to the second part of the resolution he declared that he took it for granted that no honest man, be he Englishman or any other, would dare say that India was not to be governed for the good of the people in the first and primary instance. If the proposition was sound then the next proposition was that if India was to be governed for the good of the people, then who was to govern her? Certainly no class, no section, no community, but the people of this country. He recognised ungrudgingly that the British nation had contributed towards what modern India was. But he refused—and he emphatically refused—to say that therefore the English people should have the monopoly of power in this country.

The portion of his speech, however, which seems to be in contrast to the present policy of this great Muslim leader is the following important pronouncement he made, but experience is there to justify change :—

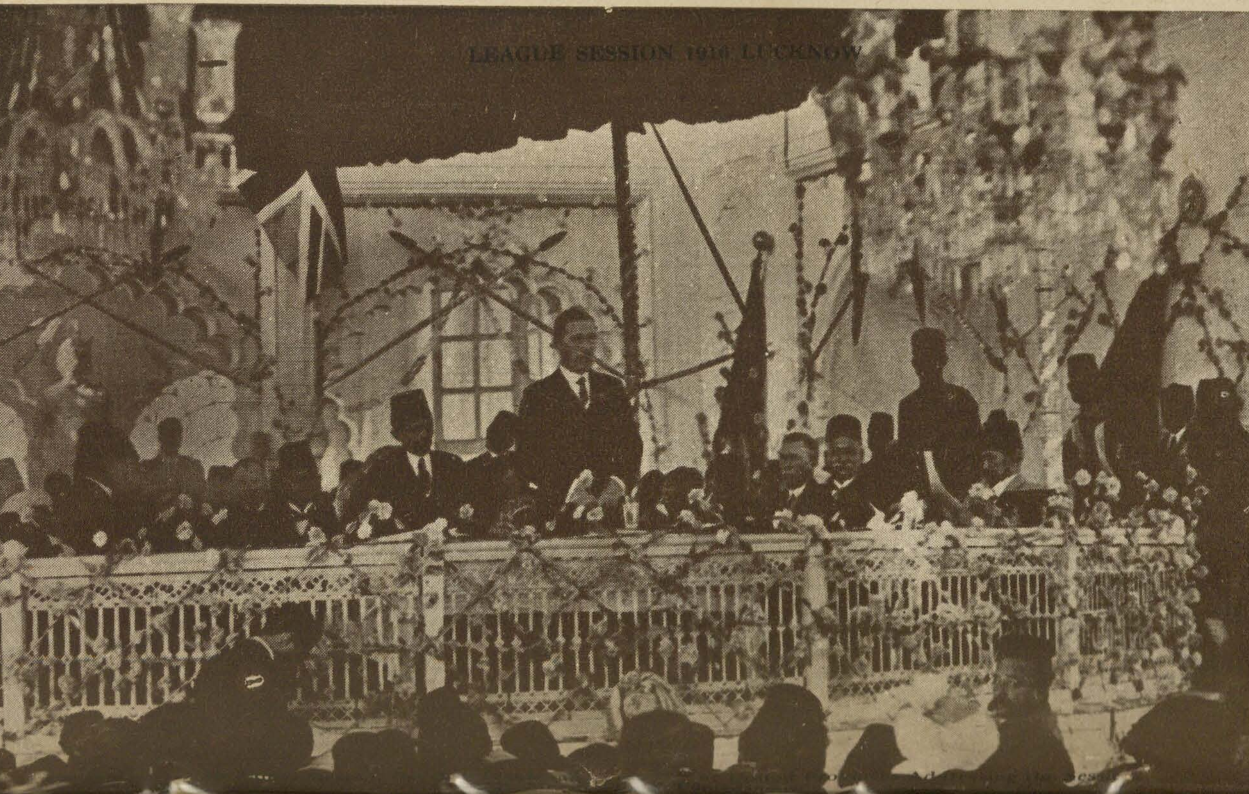
" It is said that we are going on at a tre-

mendous speed, that we are a minority and that it might afterwards become a Hindu Government. I want to give an answer to that. I particularly wish to address my Muslim friends on this point. Do you think, in the first instance, as to whether it is possible that this country could become a Hindu Government? Do you think that Government could be conducted by ballot boxes? Do you think that because the Hindus are in the majority, therefore they would carry on a measure in the legislative assembly and there is an end of it? If seventy millions of Muslims do not approve of a measure which is carried by a ballot box, do you think that it could be enforced and administered in this country? Do you think that the Hindu statesmen, with their intellect, with their past history, would ever think of—when they get self-government—enforcing a measure by ballot box? Then what is there to fear? Therefore I say to my Muslim friends not to fear. This is a bogey, which is put before you by your enemies to frighten you, to scare you away, from the co-operation with the Hindus, which is essential for the establishment of self-government. If this country is not to be governed by the Hindus, let me tell you in the same spirit, it was not to be governed by the Muslims either and certainly not by the English. It is to be governed by the people and the sons of this country and I, standing here,—I believe I am voicing the feelings of the whole of India—say that what

we demand is the immediate transfer of the substantial power of Government of this country and that is the prinicipal demand of our scheme of reforms."

A resolution on the lines of that of the Muslim League was adopted by the Congress also and Jinnah was one of the principal speakers thereon. His speech was almost the same that he delivered at the sessions of the Muslim League, raising the same points and employing the same arguments.

The last few years ending with the year 1917, had been those of great activity for Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Plunging courageously into the stormy abyss of communal politics, he inaugurated a new atmosphere by inviting the Muslim League to Bombay, side by side with the Congress, and directed the waves of sectarian fanaticism into a channel that promised a calm and smooth sailing. Piloting with a remarkable dexterity the barge of Indian opinion he landed with the prized booty of communal harmony—a problem which hitherto had seemed invincible, and armed with the strength of this achievement he served on the British Government an ultimatum for the demand for India of responsible government which had already been promised by them. With the progress of the various stages of communal settlement the note underlying his speeches became more and more emphatic



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until at Calcutta, he finally declared that there should be a time-limit for the realisation of the goal set forth for India. The striking likeness of the League Resolution with that of the Congress only shows to what extent this great man exercised his personal influence over the deliberations of the leaders of both the organisations, one entirely and the other partially communal. These years saw a great personal triumph for Jinnah and he was not only blessed by all shades of the Indian public opinion but also by the elder and sober-minded English statesmen. Every one admired his dynamic personality and the enthusiasm with which he stood up to his conviction, the belief that he had in bringing about a settlement of the communal settlement, and final achievement of the *entente cordiale* ending with the Congress-League Pact.

The conduct of the Home Rule agitation on the lines it was run, completely changed the aspect of the Indian politics. For the first time in the history of India, politics had been given a religious tinge. For the first time, the faith of people was used for the realisation of a secular object. The vigorous propaganda made by Mrs. Besant took the colour of a religious appeal. " Home Rule has become so intertwined with Religion," declared Mrs. Besant during her presidential address at Calcutta in 1917, " by the prayers offered up in the great Southern Temples—sacred places

of pilgrimage—and spreading from there to village temples, and also by its being preached up and down the country by Sadhus and Sanyasins." Another factor that largely contributed to the great success of the movement, points out Pattabhi Sitaramayya, was that from its inception it recognised the integrity of language areas, and in organising the country, adopted the linguistic principle as determining the provincial delimitations. In this respect it went ahead of the Congress and was its forerunner in reality.

It is clear, therefore, that while the Home Rule agitation awakened among the Hindus a great deal of political consciousness, and while it kindled in them a desire of self-realisation and self-possession, it unconsciously injected in them the secret germs of religious fanaticism and linguistic provincialism. The inevitable result, therefore, was obvious. It divided the Muslims and Hindus and infused in them the spirit of adopting different methods for the realisation of the same goal—a spirit which persists up to now. It also created within the vast national assemblage, the unity of which was in sight after the Lucknow Pact, the idea of various groups that existed either on the grounds of faith or on consideration of languages. At a time when the religious feelings of the Musalmans had already been roused by the deterioration of the international situation in the Balkans and the extremist sections of

opinion both among the Hindus and Muslims were preaching the separatist doctrines, it was not prudent on the part of the promoters of the Home Rule movement to direct its activities into the channels of sectarianism, specially in view of the fact that sober-minded readers had recently succeeded in bringing the two great organisations—the Muslim League and the Congress—together, for the realisation of a common object. But the Oriental mind was at work, and in the heat of the moment few foresaw the ultimate end to which such a movement was bound to lead.

Repercussions of the religious appeal for the Home Rule propaganda started before long. Hindu-Muslim riots had broken out in many places. Arrah had seen a vigorous frenzy of rioters and Muslims had felt that they had been persecuted mercilessly by the Hindus in that town. They also felt that the studied silence of the Hindu leaders was not in harmony with the atmosphere of unity prevailing at the time in the country, and they were getting more and more suspicious of their attitude. A resolution was moved during the sessions of the All-India Muslim League at Calcutta in 1917, by (Sir) Raza Ali of the United Provinces, condemning the Hindu rioters at Arrah, and their secret sympathisers, expressing deep regret at the silence of responsible Hindu leaders at occurrences in Bihar, indignation at the failure of C. I. D. to obtain

timely information of the riot and also expressing regret at the weakness shown by authorities in facing the situation. Syed Raza Ali deplored the attitude of the Indian National Congress, in not strongly condemning the action of Hindu fanatics at Arrah. He wished to tell Hindu leaders that Muslims had joined them in demanding Home Rule at considerable sacrifice and also because they trusted that future conditions of the country would improve under Home Rule. The Hindus must, he said, respect the religious feelings of Muslims. If they began to interfere with those, co-operation between them would be impossible. Muslims would not allow anybody, whether it is the Government or Hindu community or Parsee or Christian, to prevent the Muslims from performing their religious obligations. The speaker himself was a Home Ruler and he appealed to Hindus in the interest of the good relations between the two communities to see that Arrah incidents were not repeated. He repudiated the suggestion made in certain quarters that the whole blame rested on the Government. The resolution was carried unanimously.

Social reform also was being fostered by men like Gandhi, a natural outcome of which was that the suspicions of Muslims regarding the attitude of Hindu leadership—a demonstration of which was found in the resolution of Syed Raza Ali—were confirmed before long.

In a letter addressed to the *Statesman*, Calcutta, in reply to a letter written by one Mr. Irwin, Gandhi wrote: "...Rightly or wrongly, worship of the cow is ingrained in the Hindu nature and I see no escape from a most bigoted and sanguinary strife over this question between Christians and Muslims on the one hand and Hindus on the other except in the fullest recognition and practice by the Hindus of the religion of *Ahimsa*, which it is my self-imposed and humble mission in life to preach. Let the truth be faced. It must not be supposed that Hindus feel nothing about the cow-slaughter going on for the Europeans. I know that their wrath is today being buried under the awe inspired by the English rule. But there is not a Hindu throughout the length and breadth of India who does not expect one day to free his land from cow-slaughter. But contrary to the genius of Hinduism as I know it, he would not mind forcing even at the point of the sword either the Christian or the Muhammadan to abandon cow-slaughter."

The above letter was certainly not written to injure the feelings of either Christians or Muslims, but it provided a strange contrast with the utterances of Mohammad Ali Jinnah at the time. Social reform, as always is the case, whether conducted by Hindu or Muslim leaders, was bound to take a religious turn in India and Gandhi as well as Muslim leaders

could not think of inspiring their respective people but through a religious appeal. Things existed and they had to be acknowledged, and as Gandhi himself said it was the relation of a bare fact.

CHAPTER IX

ENTER GANDHI

The year 1918 opened with great activity. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi who brought with him, in 1914, a reputation of the champion of the rights of Indians in South Africa introduced in Indian politics a new method of political agitation—passive resistance—which was reputed to have done wonders in Africa. He had already during his short stay in India made rapid strides towards popularity among the Hindus. His unique treatment of the problem facing the ryots of Champaran, the indigo district, had won him considerable recognition from his people. Early in February when Gandhi came to Bombay he was handling disturbances in Kaira district. An influential and largely attended meeting of Bombay merchants and traders was held to welcome him at the Moolji Jetha Market under the presidentship of Jamnadas Dwarkadas, when he explained to the audience the situation in the Kaira district. The account of the meeting as published in the *Bombay Chronicle* of the 5th of February 1918, is worthy of note inasmuch as it gives us an idea about the influence he had come to wield over the minds of the people by that time. In opening the meeting Jamnadas said that Gandhi needed

no introduction, for everyone knew that in whatever question he had engrossed himself, he had scored nothing but success. Leaders like Gandhi were wanted not only in India but in the whole world. If the Government continued its current attitude, said Jamnadas, and if the people suffer in consequence, the merchants of Bombay should strain every nerve to remove the sufferings, and besides giving their money, they would undergo hardships if need be. Towards the end of the meeting, B. G. Horniman rose after Gandhi had already explained to the audience the whole situation, and said: " My difficulty is that I have not understood Mr. Gandhi's speech (laughter), but I can only say that I have such implicit confidence in his righteousness and his true judgment in a matter of this kind that I can blindly subscribe to what he has said (cheers) whether I understand it or not (laughter). I do not say this merely to raise a laugh, but because I know that when people are suffering and require to be protected, what Mr. Gandhi wishes to do will be right, and must be, and ought to be, done for these people." And on the 24th of March 1918, Gandhi started passive resistance in Kaira which won him further laurels, although the result was as much to the credit of the Government as to his claim of success.

The war was in full swing and the British Government had not yet succeeded in

gaining the alliance of the United States of America for its prosecution. The Home Government felt that the support India had given so far in men and money was not quite sufficient for the successful prosecution of the war and strongly urged the Government of India to make a fresh drive in order to enlist more support from this country. The Viceroy, Lord Chelmsford, on receiving these instructions struck upon a new device to further the cause of the Empire. He decided to convene a special War Conference at Delhi, and skipping over most of the leading Indian politicians, invited Gandhi along with a host of Rajahs and landlords and merchants to attend the Conference.*

"Mr. Gandhi received this invitation even while he was busy exhorting the peasants of Kaira to fight the No-Tax campaign to a finish. But the Government knew their men. They were convinced, in spite of all appearances to the contrary, that Mr. Gandhi was loyal to the core to the British Empire. And how he fully justified this confidence placed in him by the Government can be gathered from the following words from a letter addressed by Mr. Gandhi to the Viceroy immediately after the Conference: 'If I could make my countrymen retrace their steps, I would make them withdraw all the Congress Resolutions and not

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* Indulal K. Yajnik.

whisper Home Rule or Responsible Government during the pendency of the War. I would make India offer all her able-bodied sons as a sacrifice to the Empire at its critical moment.' ...(This letter was conveyed to the Viceroy personally by a *pure man* in the person of Rev. Ireland of the Cambridge Mission).

"The following remarks of Mr. Gandhi about his exploits in Champaran and Kaira also show his attitude towards the British Government. 'In Champaran by resisting an age-long tyranny I have shown the ultimate sovereignty of British justice. In Kaira, a population which was cursing the Government now feels that it and not the Government is the power and it is prepared to suffer for the truth it represents. It is, therefore, losing its bitterness and is saying to itself that the Government must be a Government for the people for it tolerates ordinary and responsible disobedience where injustice is felt."

Gandhi went to Delhi to attend the Conference. But on reaching there when he found that Tilak, Mrs. Besant and Ali Brothers had been excluded from the Conference he felt that he should not attend it. "He was also worried over some secret treaties between England and Italy, to which Rev. Andrews drew his attention. He was, therefore, assailed by wholesome doubts about the morality of participation in the War Conference. He,

therefore, consoled himself by writing a letter to the Viceroy, then saw him privately and discussed all his difficulties with him and finally decided to attend the Conference, 'if for no other reason than certainly out of my great regard for yourself (Viceroy).' "

Indulal Yajnik* from whom the above quotations are taken, has perhaps employed the argument with a vengeance in justification of his own opinion, which seems to be directly in opposition to the attitude which Gandhi adopted towards contemporary politics. As such they might be dismissed as having no bearing on the point here discussed. Two things are, however, clear. Firstly, that by his association with the war effort, he had no mind to displease his merchant friends. " Whilst, therefore, it is clear to me," he wrote to the Viceroy, "that we should give to the Empire every available man for its defence, I fear that I cannot say the same thing about financial assistance. My intimate intercourse with the ryots convinces me that India has already donated to the Imperial Exchequer beyond her capacity. I know that in making this statement I am voicing the opinion of the majority of my countrymen." Everyone, who has an intimate knowledge of India and her various strata of society, will not hesitate to admit that his associating ryots with donations

*Yajnik was Gandhi's Secretary, the predecessor of Mahadev Desai.

to the Imperial Exchequer is absurd. His refusal to collect money must have been really directed to benefit his rich friends, upon whom his future success in public life depended.

Secondly, the unique method that Gandhi adopted of coupling contradictory terms in political phraseology, employed in his writings and speeches, helped him to keep himself in good favour of everybody. "Lastly," he wrote in the same letter, "I would like you to ask His Majesty's Ministers to give definite assurances about Mohammadan States. I am sure you know that every Mohammadan is deeply interested in them. As a Hindu I cannot be indifferent to their cause. Their sorrows must be our sorrows. In the most scrupulous regard for the rights of these States, and for the Muslim sentiments as to places of worship, and in your just and timely treatment of the Indian claim of Home Rule, lies the safety of the Empire. I write this, because I love the English nation, and I wish to evoke in every Indian the loyalty of the Englishman." The result obviously was that the enraged Muslims hailed him as a champion of their cause, and the British nation took him to be a loyal Indian. This amazing contrivance worked its subtle influence on the minds of his countrymen, with a temperament characteristic of the Orient. Thus repression was made synonymous with British justice ; resistance became loyalty;

outrage became non-violence ; denial became acceptance ; enmity became friendship ; orthodoxy became tolerance ; extremism became nationalism.

On the 30th of April, 1918, the War Conference was held in Delhi. Gandhi first addressing the Conference in Urdu established an ever memorable land-mark in Indian history. He translated his speech into English afterwards. " With a full sense of my responsibility I beg to support the resolution." With these words did Gandhi give his assent to the recruiting campaign for purposes of which the War Conference was convened, and on return from Delhi busied himself to fulfil his pledge. The Provincial War Conference, however, convened in Bombay in which both Tilak and Gandhi were invited, served to aggravate the differences between the two schools of the politics led by these two leaders. The militant spirit and his national self-respect would not allow Tilak to participate in the Conference unless some promise had been given by the British Government for the political emancipation of India from bondage or for some sort of political reform, failing which he staged a walk-out and refused to participate in its deliberations. But Gandhi could not do likewise. He, therefore, chose to remain a silent spectator of the show.

The circumstances in which the Provincial

Bombay War Conference was held and its effects on the minds of the people and subsequent events provide an interesting study. In the month of March, the Home Rule League had decided to send a delegation under the leadership of Tilak in order to acquaint the British public of the real situation in India. Before, however, they could reach England their passports were cancelled and they landed in Cape Town in South Africa, pending the final orders, for which the Viceroy of India had appealed to the British Cabinet. A public meeting of the citizens of Bombay was, therefore, held at Shantaram's Chawl, on Monday, the 8th of April, to protest against the order prohibiting Tilak and his fellow-delegates of the Home Rule League from proceeding to England, and to express its warm appreciation of the wise, considerate and statesmanlike action of His Excellency the Viceroy in having mitigated the severity of the instructions received from England. M. A. Jinnah presided, and there was a large attendance.

The Chairman addressing the meeting said that it was a shock for them to hear the news of His Majesty's Government and it seemed to him that the Home Government had only ears and no eyes. The timely intervention of the Viceroy, however, came as a soothing corrective and had allayed public opinion to a certain extent. He wanted to know on whose representations and on what

grounds the Government in England, without reference, as it appeared, to the Government of India, came to this most unjust, unfair and unwise conclusion. It only proved that India could no longer be governed from a distance of seven thousand miles. Apart from the question of the freedom of British citizens to travel within the Empire, it involved a question of vital importance to India. Were not her representatives to be allowed to present their views and case to the statesmen and people of Great Britain, who would have to decide the destinies of this country? They knew that there was a powerful party, headed by Lord Sydenham, well-organised, and backed up by wealth and influence, carrying on a campaign of vilification and misrepresentation regarding India's demand for self-government, her aims and objects, her ideals and aspirations. Was it fair, then, that one side only should be allowed to be heard? Was the case of India to be decided *ex-parte*? They knew that the Empire was going through most critical times. They fully shared the anxiety, though he must say that they were not given the opportunities fully to share the responsibilities and burden which, he was sure, they would have gladly borne, had they been allowed to do so. But just as the war was a matter of life and death for the Empire—and they shared the feeling to the utmost—so was the question of the constitutional reforms of the Government of India, a matter of life and death to the people of

India and they expected the Empire to share their feelings and help them.

Besides, who were the people before whom they were going? The British statesmen. Surely if the tribunal was preoccupied or pre-engaged, Tilak and his party would have seen it for themselves and in the interest of the cause they had at heart, they would not have forced an unwilling judge to give them a hearing. On the other hand, Tilak would have given the greatest attention to any suggestion or recommendation that might have been made to them by His Majesty's Government. All they wanted was that they should have had a hearing—a fair and impartial hearing. They wished that their case which was a just one should not have gone against them by default. Jinnah hoped that the timely intervention of His Excellency the Viceroy, for which the Indian public was thankful to him, would put the matter right and the Home Rule Delegation would be allowed to proceed to England. When the people of India had decided to send their representatives to the final tribunal —Parliament and the British nation,—so that their case might be put before them, he asked, by what canon of fairness or principle of justice did His Majesty's Government said that they would not give them a hearing and that they should not be allowed to go to England?

B. G. Horniman moved the following

resolution: "This meeting of the citizens of Bombay respectfully protests against the action taken by His Majesty's Government in England cancelling the passports granted by the Government of India to Mr. B. G. Tilak and his fellow delegates of the Home Rule League, while proceeding to England to place the case for self-government for India before the British people. And this meeting declares that, while the Indian people would highly disapprove of any course being pursued which would be calculated in any way to embarrass the Government, or the people in Great Britain, in the prosecution of the war, and, on the contrary, are eager to render every assistance in that respect, they desire to represent that it is unfair and impolitic to refuse facilities to the trusted delegates of the Indian people to represent their cause before the British public in the face of the insidious campaign against the policy of self-government for India now being carried on by their opponents; that such refusal of passport is an improper interference, even in time of war, with the right of free movement of His Majesty's subjects within the Empire; and that Tilak and his fellow delegates may be implicitly trusted while in England to take no step which could in any way tend to endanger the cause of the Empire in its struggle for liberty or to endanger the successful prosecution of the war." The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the chair and Jinnah appealed to the millionaires of

Bombay to provide the citizens of Bombay with a public hall, where they could hold meetings freely.

The British Government had, however, thought it futile for the Home Rule League deputation to visit England and they therefore stuck to their decision. Public indignation, once again, rose high and Mohammad Ali Jinnah, President of the All-India Home Rule League, Bombay Branch, sent the following telegram to the Prime Minister, the Viceroy and the Secretary of State for India: "I am directed by the Bombay Branch of the All-India Home Rule League to state that the news that His Majesty's Government have finally refused permission to allow the Home Rule Deputation headed by Mr. B. G. Tilak to proceed to England has been received with profound regret. They feel that His Majesty's Government in taking this action must have done so under a misapprehension as to the nature and intention of the Deputation and have failed to realise the unfortunate effects of it on public opinion in this country. The Indian public would refuse to be a party to any course which was calculated to cause embarrassment at this critical juncture to the authorities in England and His Majesty's Government may rest assured that had the delegates proceeded to England they would have maintained a scrupulous regard for this sincere feeling of the Indian people. But in view of the vigorous

campaign led by Lord Sydenham and other influential persons against self-government for India now being carried on in England they feel the emergent necessity that the representatives of the Indian National movement should be able to place their case directly before the electors of the United Kingdom in whose hands the ultimate decision regarding the scheme of reforms now under consideration lies. I am, therefore, to urge once more upon the serious consideration of His Majesty's Government the desirability of rescinding their orders."

Side by side with this, the growing menace of the war was another matter, which required a careful consideration and arrested all attention of the Indian leaders. It was felt, at the time, that the policy should be clearly restated, and issues and misunderstandings cleared. A manifesto signed by prominent leaders including Mrs. Annie Besant, Jinnah and Tilak was therefore issued to the press and was published in the *Bombay Chronicle* of the 24th of April 1918. The following is its full text:

"The present time is a time for grave and weighty decisions that affect the future not only of Great Britain, India and the Empire, but of the world. The War has reached a critical stage and plain speech is necessary alike on the part of Great Britain and of India, if the Empire is to triumph over

her enemies, if liberty is to triumph over force, law over autocracy. In the working of Providence, Who guides the destinies of nations, Great Britain and India have been brought together and have lived side by side for one hundred and sixty years. The union has brought both gain and loss to both, gain to India by being brought into contact with a liberty-loving and progressive Western nation, gain to England by an immense increase of wealth and impetus to commerce, loss to India by the destruction of her power of self-defence and by her becoming a dependency instead of member of warlike, wealthy and independent states, loss to England by clouding of her principles in the adoption of autocracy and by consequent lowering of her status in the world's eyes. The Army Act of 1878 completed India's subjection and helplessness and in the moment of the Empire's need, she finds herself not only in danger of invasion from Central Asia as in old days, but of Central Asia dominated by Germany, and herself without her old power of self-defence. Yet the old martial spirit is not dead, as is shown by her soldiers in the present war. Bengal has shown the capacity of its young men for quickly becoming soldiers and the spirit that Bengal has shown exists all over India, even outside the so-called martial races. Can that be called out now for the defence alike of India and the Empire? Is it too late to evoke the spirit that sprang up in 1914 and was rejected? We

believe it is not even too late, but that which Mr. Lloyd George said of Ireland is true of India. We cannot ask young men to fight for principles, the application of which is denied to their own country. A subject race cannot fight for others with the heart and energy with which a free race can fight for the freedom of itself and others. If India is to make great sacrifices in the defence of the Empire, it must be as a partner in the Empire and not as a dependency. Let her feel that she is fighting for her own freedom as well as for the commonwealth of free nations under the British Crown and then she will strain every nerve to stand by England to the last. For this there must be mutual trust. His Majesty's Government has already promised responsible government to India. Let full responsible government be established in India within a definite period to be fixed by statute with the Congress-League scheme as the first stage and a Bill to that effect be introduced into Parliament at once.

"Let India's leaders be taken into confidence now and treated as recognised sharers in the perils and triumphs of the struggle. Let the Governor-General and the Secretary of State for India say to the leaders of the people what they want. Let us all feel that we are one in heart and aim, that we are not servants fighting for our masters, but free men fighting beside free, for the common heritage of

freedom. We do not want to break our tie with England, we do not want to see it broken by the war into which she entered in the defence of liberty. We detest German tyranny and German methods. The policy of Great Britain has made it impossible for us alone to defend our own frontiers and our own coasts. We do not want to change the mutual advantage. We are ready to make sacrifices, we are ready to fight and work in India as English men and English women are fighting and working in England, but it must be for a similar reason. We must work and fight to win liberty, the prize of victory, as they work and fight to keep the liberty they won in the past generations. Responsible government is promised. But the promise is indefinite. Let England pledge herself definitely to redeem the promise by accepting here, as in Ireland, that which our leaders have asked in the Congress and League Pact and we will work heart and soul to save Britain, India and the Empire. We will triumph with her or we will go down with her in world ruin. Do not misunderstand us as we shall try to help Britain in any case, for we cannot forget the ties of many years and we believe that in the immediate future, liberty stands or falls with the British Empire. But if Britain refuses us our place in the Empire, we shall try as leading a forlorn hope, whereas if Britain welcomes us as a nation whose freedom depends upon the issue of the war, the popular

enthusiasm will rise to fighting point. Let not reactionary British politicians prevail at this moment and thus ruin the Empire. Trust us and we will not fail you. Be true to us and we will be true to you. Do not ask us to give everything while you give nothing, to trust you while you distrust us, and try to use us for your own advantage only. Drill us, arm us, officer us with our own countrymen, make us a huge citizen army and take, if you will, the flower of our troops to fight abroad. But let us fight, under the banner of liberty, for nothing less than that will nerve our men to fight and our women to sacrifice."

Then came the War Conference of Delhi, where a section of leaders led by Mohammad Ali Jinnah brought forward a resolution on constitutional eform for India. The resolution was ruled out of order by the Chairman and caused great bitterness among them. Jinnah made a short speech explaining the position of those who thought that war measures would be helped and in no way prejudiced by the taking up of constitutional reform questions in connection with the Conference. There was not an Indian, he said, who was not ready to shed his last drop of blood in the defence of the Empire. Officialdom was unnecessarily alarmed and it was thought fit to give a blow to the prestige of Indian leadership at the War Conference.

The Bombay Provincial War Conference was held on the 10th of June, 1918 at the Town Hall, and His Excellency the Governor, Lord Willingdon, presided.

Addressing the Conference, Lord Willingdon said : " Eager and anxious as I am to feel assured of an entirely united force to assist me in this campaign, there are a certain number of gentlemen, some of whom have considerable influence with the public, many of them members of the political organisation called the Home Rule League whose activities have been such of late years, that I cannot honestly feel sure of the sincerity of their support, until I have come to a clear understanding with them and have frankly expressed to them all that is in my mind. I do not wish in any detail to criticise their actions or their methods in the past, beyond saying that they have not given the help to Government that I think I was fairly entitled to expect from them in these critical days ; indeed I must frankly say that their object seems to have been at every available opportunity to increase the difficulties and embarrassment of Government whenever and wherever they could. I can claim that my Government have always felt that, in every country where there is any public feeling, any political instinct, there must always be an advanced party, the extreme left of our political life, which is generally opposed to Government, but which must be, like any

other party, given full freedom of speech, action and opinion provided it keeps within constitutional limits. And with our record of the past I think I am justified in claiming that it has been recognised that we have acted up to this view. As I have already said, the object of the Delhi Conference was to secure unity of effort and promise of strenuous, whole-hearted service. But within the last few weeks I have studied with some care the speeches and writings of some of these gentlemen since the Delhi Conference was held, and they have been of such a character that I cannot honestly feel sure of the sincerity of their desire for that unity of effort, that strenuous service, which are absolutely necessary to secure the success of our labours.

" From reading their speeches, the position of those gentlemen seems to be this: 'We quite realise the gravity of the situation, we are all anxious to help, but unless Home Rule is promised within a given number of years, and unless various other assurances are given us with regard to other matters, we do not think we can stir the imagination of the people, and we cannot hope for a successful issue to the recruiting campaign.' I understand that these gentlemen disclaim any suggestion that they are trying to make a bargain, and I of course accept their disclaimer, but if I have fairly stated their position, I must honestly confess that I don't think their help will be

of a very active character. These gentlemen must be perfectly well aware that no promises of the kind they seem to desire can possibly be given without full constitutional sanction, and as to the request that a promise should be definitely given them of Home Rule within a certain number of years they know very well that the whole question of political reform is being considered by the British War Cabinet, and that it is quite impossible for the Viceroy or anyone else to give such a promise as they desire. I do not expect anyone even in these days to give up all political action or discussion for I fully realise that the administration of any Government must be open to criticism even in the most grave and serious times, but I do expect that criticism to be fair, to be reasonable, to be free from the bitterness which I have sometimes noticed in the past. I can accept no uncertain, no half-hearted assistance at this juncture. And with the recollection of these speeches fresh in my mind I ask these gentlemen to put aside their doubts and difficulties, and as loyal citizens of the British Empire, sincerely anxious for the success of the Allied cause, to join with us all whole-heartedly and unreservedly, and do nothing by speech, writing or action which will in any way prejudice the success of our campaign."

Tilak was then called upon to speak. He expressed on behalf of himself and all Home

Rulers deep loyalty to the King-Emperor. The resolution, however, was defective in one respect and he regretted the rules of procedure did not allow him to move an amendment to the resolution. The Chairman said that if Tilak wished to move an amendment to the resolution, he could not allow it, as he had stated at the outset. Tilak said he was not going to move an amendment. He then proceeded to say that co-operation with the Government necessitated certain things. There could be no Home Defence without Home Rule. The President here called Tilak to order and said he could not allow any political discussion. Tilak was proceeding when His Excellency again ruled him out of order. Tilak thereupon left the platform and retired from the meeting. Thus ended a sad chapter in the history of the Bombay War Conference and began one in the personal life of Lord Willingdon.

Mohammad Ali Jinnah, who remained in the Conference, on rising to speak on the resolution pointed out that the public response to the message of King-Emperor, namely, their assurance of the determination of the Presidency to continue to do her duty to her utmost capacity in the great crisis through which the Empire was passing, had the support of the entire educated community of India. There were also no two opinions at this crisis that India should go forward—nay, it

was imperative that India should develop her man-power, and utilise her resources to the fullest possible extent. But before he would proceed further, he must say that he was pained, very much pained, that His Excellency should have thought fit to cast doubts on the sincerity and the loyalty of the Home Party. He was very sorry, but with the utmost respect he must enter his emphatic protest against that. They were anxious as any one else to help the defence of the motherland and the Empire. He did not wish to take up the time of that august body at that late hour. The difference was only regarding the methods, for, Government's methods the Home Rule Party did not want. He was only making suggestions for the improvement of the scheme. The Government had their own scheme, namely, for the recruitment of sepoys, but that was not enough to save them from the German menace, which was right at their door on the frontiers. They wanted a national army or, in other words, a citizen army and not a purely mercenary army.

Continuing the speech, Jinnah pointed out that His Highness the Maharaja of Jamnagar had said that "we should not bargain, that we should not be moved by a huckstering spirit; we should wait for what we want today till tomorrow and if we do what we are required to do we shall surely get our desire." Mr. Manmohandas Ramji, on the other hand

had said, " we should do all we can now and we shall get the benefit and what we want afterwards."

Jinnah: Now is this not bargaining? Mr. Manmohandas is a strict business man; our young men are not and our recruiting field is our young men. They prefer to be made to feel that they are the citizens of the Empire and that would rouse them to come forward and make sacrifices. I don't agree that we should do all we can on the understanding that we are going to be rewarded for it afterwards, neither do I say that we should bargain and make conditions before we help the Empire, but I say that if you wish to enable us to help you, to facilitate and stimulate the recruiting, you must make the educated people feel that they are the citizens of the Empire and the King's equal subjects. But the Government do not do so. You say that we shall be trusted and made real partners in the Empire. When? We don't want words. We don't want the consideration of the matter indefinitely put off. We want action and immediate deeds. I will only give one instance of the dilatoriness. At the Delhi War Conference, we passed a resolution recommending that a substantial number of King's Commissions should be granted to the people of India and that the training colleges should be thrown open. It is nearly two months now. And what has been done? I have heard nothing

yet. We would not succeed in preparing the real defence of India, much less help the Empire, unless India is made a partner of the Empire and trusted.

The Chairman said that the speaker had better go to the Government at Delhi or Simla and say those things there, for he had no power over that matter.

Jinnah: But Your Excellency said that the Bombay Government had been directed by the Government of India to carry out the proposals embodied in the memorandum annexed to the resolution now under discussion. If the Government wanted us to co-operate with them and carry out their wishes in this province then let them trust us. I cannot agree with the methods laid down in the resolution, and I do not approve of that part of the resolution which deals with the appointment of boards.

The Chairman said Jinnah could not question the ruling of the chair.

Jinnah: I will say that I cannot support the whole of the resolution, but only a part of it. I do not approve of the personnel of the Board. I do not agree with it because I have not been given an opportunity to exercise my judgment. I want to move an amendment. But it has been ruled by Your Excellency that no amendments will be allowed. This is a

procedure which is unheard of, not known to any constitution but since the ruling is given, I must bow to it.

The Chairman had said that the Hon. Gentleman might send any suggestion he wanted to be adopted hereafter. But the speaker pointed out that the procedure had already been laid down by the Chairman, and he did not desire to challenge it. Another point was that he did not approve of the memorandum annexed to the resolution. He had had no opportunity given to him to exercise his judgment, and he refused to be a party to adopt that memorandum which he had no opportunity to consider. He hoped that His Excellency would believe him and that the Conference would also believe him, that to doubt their sincerity, their loyalty, was an insult to the Home Rule Party, and, concluded he, "I will not have it."

"Mr. Tilak's method drove him to an entirely different path. As he set his heart on the fundamental issue of transfer of political power from Government to the people, he never found any necessity or opportunity of any personal or diplomatic negotiations with the authorities. And while the authorities were invariably anxious to meet Mr. Gandhi if possible and satisfy him on any narrow issue, they sincerely detested Mr. Tilak and would not deign to meet him because he was

the embodiment of his nation's protest against the foreign rule in India."*

The influence of Gandhi grew from day to day, and although Tilak and Mrs. Besant dominated their respective Home Rule Leagues, their workers invariably looked to Gandhi for the redressing of any particular wrongs presented by them. Mrs. Besant's League finally succumbed to the influence of Gandhi and later changed its name to Swaraj League, a part of the non-co-operation movement.

M. K. Gandhi now cast his eyes in another direction. Tilak's activities and his orthodox Hinduism had completely alienated from him the sympathies of Muslim India. But Gandhi with his "reformed Hinduism" hoped to secure that co-operation from his Muslim countrymen which was essential to enable him to occupy a prominent place at the united national platform. From the very beginning of his public career in South Africa he had set his heart on creating a genuine friendship with the Musalmans. His experience there had convinced him that it was practically possible. But things were a little different in India, and he knew them. "My South African experience had convinced me," says Gandhi in his autobiography, "that it would be on the question of Hindu-Muslim unity that my *Ahimsa* would be put to its severest test, and that the question presented the widest field for my experi-

***Gandhi as I know Him.* Indulal K. Yajnik.

ments in *Ahimsa.*" The experiments began with his speech in the Muslim League sessions in Calcutta when he addressed the Muslim audience to make an attempt to secure the release of the Ali Brothers who were then interned, and early in 1918 he quietly began to establish contact with them and opened correspondence with the Government on the matter. Later, he espoused the Muslim demands on the Khilafat question. The Khilafat question in his opinion was not necessarily a movement against the Government. "I found that the Muslim demand about the Khilafat was not only not against the ethical principle, but that the British Prime Minister had admitted the justice of the Muslim demands. I felt, therefore, bound to render all the help I could in securing the due fulfilment of the Prime Minister's pledge," says he. Whether his association with the Khilafat movement came as a duty towards his Muslim countrymen or towards the British Prime Minister is another question, but the fact remains that Gandhi scored a victory over other Hindu leaders, and for the time being he gained immeasurable support from the Muslims.

CHAPTER X

AN UNPOPULAR FAREWELL

Bombay's resentment against the public insult offered to members of the Indian Home Rule League by His Excellency Lord Willingdon, as Chairman of the Bombay Provincial War Conference, was fully evidenced on the 16th of June 1918, in the huge popular demonstration at Shantaram's Chawl and later at the overflowing meeting in China Baug. The day was the Home Rule Day, and was celebrated with a march of volunteers through the city making collections in aid of the League. About fifty volunteers mustered at Chowpatty in the afternoon and proceeded through the city, by the advertised route, with the Home Rule flags flying. It was an inspiring sight to see them bravely marching, and the collections on the route were substantial. Many well-known ladies and gentlemen acted as voluntary collectors on the occasion and it was difficult to withstand their persuasion. Owing to the procession starting earlier, a large number of people had to go disappointed. Home Rule Day was observed as a holiday by the Mulji Jaitha Market, the principal market in the city. The procession, starting from Chowpatty, went through the

business quarters of the city—and at Shantaram's Chawl itself, a huge crowd had gathered very long before the time of the meeting, so much so that it was very difficult to pass along the roads, and those who got admission into the square must have thought themselves fortunate, although they had to squeeze themselves somehow or other and to sit in that uncomfortable position for well-nigh three hours. The crowd numbered about fifteen thousand.

M. K. Gandhi presided.

The proceedings of the meeting began with great enthusiasm and M. A. Jinnah moved the following resolution :

"That this meeting is of opinion that the methods and measures of Government for the utilisation of the man-power and the resources of India in the war are not such as to secure their fullest possible development in that—

(*a*) there is a spirit of distrust of the people running throughout their handling of this great national work ;

(*b*) the officials in charge of the respective departments fail to seek in a spirit of equality the co-operation of the people in the prosecution of the war ;

(*c*) interminable delay is taking place in the amendment of the Arms Act in order to enable the general body of people to take and carry arms if they so desire;

(*d*) the commissioned ranks in the Indian Army are not yet thrown open freely to Indians nor are all racial bars and distinctions removed ;

(*e*) the recommendations of the Imperial War Conference at Delhi, for admitting Indians to existing Military Colleges and for establishing new colleges forthwith, have not been given effect to.

"This meeting is of opinion that though every loyal citizen of India desires whole-heartedly to respond to the call of the Premier, it is difficult for the leaders to secure full and free reponse from the people in regard to military services unless the present policy of the Government of India is changed by removing the above-mentioned defects."

Jinnah declared that he did not wish to say anything more regarding Lord Willingdon's speech at the War Conference except that his speech and conduct, in his opinion, was the greatest possible blunder. Lord Willingdon had undoubtedly—whatever might be said by

other people to defend him—insulted the Home Rule League. But that was entirely a matter between Lord Willingdon and themselves: it was a personal matter. Their decision was that so long as Lord Willingdon did not withdraw his insult, they could not possibly attend any meeting over which he was presiding.

At the same time, however, they should point out to the Government that if they were not able to co-operate fully with Government, they did not mean that they did not wish to co-operate, but what they meant was that the Government's policy was such that it did not enable them to get the fullest man-power for the prosecution of the war and defence of the country. He was prepared to accept that the statement regarding the German menace was a correct one. If that was true, what should be the policy of the Government? The policy should be to resort to measures and methods which would enable the Government to utilise to the fullest the man-power of India. But was the Government doing that? Their policy on the other hand was that they wanted five lakhs of sepoys, and that was all. But India had got many more men. They had the flower of India's manhood, who would fight for this country, for their homes and hearths as nobody else would fight. What measures had the Government adopted to take up that class and why was it that they had taken no

steps? They had at the outbreak of war a feeling of enthusiasm of loyalty, and the whole of India that was distrusted before, was ready to rally round the Empire. Hundreds and thousands of educated men in Bombay, even members of Bar, volunteered themselves to help the prosecution of the war. That expression of loyalty, that enthusiasm—how was it treated? It was spurned. He knew that their young men studying at Oxford and Cambridge came forward to enlist in the Territorial Army, and the answer was "No." They petitioned to the Secretary of State, and they were informed that the whole question of the Army employment would be considered after the war. What more could they expect the people to do? That was the first wave of enthusiasm on the part of the people of India. A second opportunity then occurred. When the Indian Defence Force Bill was introduced into the Imperial Legislative Council, the country at large hailed that measure and welcomed it. Tilak addressed an audience appealing to the young men of this Presidency to come forward and enlist themselves. But when the Bill became law, when the rules and regulations were framed, it was mutilated and their hearts were again numbed. The bureaucracy was again behind it. It chilled the Indians. At the present moment the Viceroy at the Delhi Conference told them that the situation was very critical. They were told that the German menace was a real one. They were

told that their frontiers were not safe, and they were asked to co-operate, and that Conference after due and careful consideration made some recommendations, and what had the Government done to carry them out?

"Lord Willingdon has said that the support of the Home Rule Party is half-hearted. My answer is this," retorted Mohammad Ali Jinnah, "that your policy is more than half-hearted to get the fullest man-power of India. You are playing with the people, and you are not in earnest. Your methods and policy are all wrong. I cannot believe that even a bureaucrat is so blind as not to see it. Such policy, such conduct, had been pursued for the last four years, and the conclusion that I come to is this: that they do not trust us and, therefore, are not prepared to allow us to take up arms for the defence of our own motherland and of the Empire. They want us to continue an organisation, which they call an army, which is a sepoy army and nothing else, and they then turn round and tell us that we are not helping them. I say what Mr. Montagu in his speech on the Mesopotamia Report has said? Mr. Montagu put forward the very case that I am going to put forward. He said that the Government of India is 'too wooden, too iron, too antediluvian to be of any use for the modern purpose we have in view'." Mr. Montagu

had said, he pointed out, that the Indians were not trusted; they were ready to co-operate, and that the share of the Indian people had been greater than that of Indian Government. "I say," concluded he, "that unless you change your policy, you will not enable us to help you to the fullest of our power."

Officialdom, however, was also up and doing, and, as Lord Willingdon's term of office had expired, it was proposed that a public farewell should be given to him. Some of the citizens of Bombay under the leadership of Sir Stanley Reed, then editor of the *Times of India*, had formed themselves into a committee and an application had been sent to the Sheriff of Bombay to secure the necessary permission to hold a public function in honour of the departing Governor. Popular will was on the other hand bent upon asserting itself. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, once again, gave a lead. A letter, dated the 8th of November signed by him and twenty-nine others was sent to Sir Stanley Reed and others intimating to them the protest and intention of the citizens of Bombay.

"We understand that you and other gentlemen have constituted yourselves as a Committee, of which you are appointed the Honorary Secretary, with the object of holding a public meeting of the citizens of Bombay for the purpose of voting a

memorial on behalf of the City of Bombay to His Excellency Lord Willingdon.

"We feel that you cannot be unaware that, in view of the record of Lord Willingdon's administration and certain features of it, personal to himself, there will be very strong opposition to any such proposed action, if it should purport to be taken on behalf of the citizens of Bombay. And we think it desirable to give you notice, which we now do, that should any such meeting be called we shall attend the same for the purpose of opposing by motion, amendment or otherwise in a constitutional manner, any proposal to vote an address to His Excellency or otherwise to imply that the citizens of Bombay are desirous of commemorating or approving the administration of Lord Willingdon or his services as Governor of Bombay.

"We beg to request, further, that if it is your intention to hold such meeting, you will intimate to us the date of the meeting and make arrangements to afford us every reasonable facility for opposing, by amendment, speech and vote, any motion which may be put forward at the meeting and also for the taking of a poll, if necessary.

"We have thought it desirable to make this request in order that the proceedings may be conducted with due decorum and order

and according to the recognised rules and procedure of public meetings."

A simultaneous letter for a counter meeting was also sent to the Sheriff of Bombay.

In the meantime, however, leaders like B. G. Horniman started a vigorous public exposition of facts as to why Lord Willingdon's regime did not deserve public praise. On the 26th of November first of the series of public addresses was delivered by Mr. Horniman—a lengthy indictment which exposed innumerable facts of public interest and the maladministration of Lord Willingdon's government. The portion given below has twofold importance, inasmuch as it not only has a bearing on the current events, but also on the part that Mohammad Ali Jinnah played in bringing the Muslim League and National Congress together in 1915, in the face of a very strong opposition, both from the official and the official-ridden classes.

"He (said Horniman) would go back a few years and would remind them of another very important thing which took place in the Presidency. Here was another matter in regard to which, if the conspiracy which Lord Willingdon by his weakness allowed to be carried on, had succeeded in its object, they should not be standing where they were that day in regard to the political advancement of the country. The present political advancement

of the country rested, as they all knew, on a very sure and solid foundation—foundation of the Hindu-Muslim entente. The foundation-stone was laid in Bombay three years ago when owing to the efforts of their friend, Mr. Jinnah (loud cheers), owing to his initiative and persistent and vigorous efforts, the All-India Muslim League held its session in Bombay and entered into a coalition with the Indian National Congress. He would remind them that if that conspiracy, the history of which he was going to relate, had been allowed to succeed they would not have been able to carry their political advancement to the position where it stood to-day. They did not owe anything to Lord Willingdon for that advancement. On the contrary, they had a very grave indictment to make against him and his administration in regard to the whole history of that miserable affair. When Mr. Jinnah first started the idea of holding the All-India Muslim League session in Bombay at the time of the Indian National Congress, certain parties immediately set to work to defeat the object which he and his friends had in view. It was not, in the beginning, any of the Muslims of Bombay who took the initiative in the matter but it was a certain officer of Government, the late Commissioner of Police, who instigated them to do so. However that might be, the movement was carried on and it was a most disgraceful movement because it had for its ultimate object the breaking up by

violence of the session of the Muslim League if they could not carry out their intention of preventing the League from coming to Bombay at all (shame). Up to a certain point during that time they were receiving the active support of Mr. Edwardes and he did not think it was any breach of confidence to say that it was not until Mr. Jinnah went to the Governor and represented strongly what was being done that the impropriety of the procedure of the Commissioner of Police was recognised and Lord Willingdon himself intervened in the matter and Mr. Edwardes was sent for and told that he was not to concern himself in the matter any more. There was to his mind the very clearest evidence that though Mr. Edwardes ceased giving the same active support to that movement he continued to sit in his office and encourage what was going on.

"Matters at last got to such a pitch that a roundtable conference had to be held at Government House at which the Governor himself was present and a solemn undertaking was given to the Governor by each side that they would recognise certain conditions.

The Government of Bombay attached so much importance to the matter that they issued a Press Note and went to the length of publishing it in the Government Gazette. He referred to this fact in order to impress upon

the meeting the official character of the undertaking and the pledge given to the Governor by Mr. Suleman Cassum Mitha and his friends.

"And what happened at the sitting of the Muslim League? What did Mr. Suleman Cassum Mitha do? He went there with a gang of hooligans and by methods of violence they succeeded in breaking up for the time being the sitting of the All-India Muslim League (shame). That was how Mr. Suleman Cassum Mitha carried out the pledge which he had given to the Governor of Bombay and which had been officially enshrined in a Government document (shame). Mr. Suleman Cassum Mitha and his friends went into that pandal and carried out their foul purpose. The Commissioner of Police and his Deputy Commissioners were sitting outside in motor cars with armed police in the offing waiting for what they thought was going to happen. On that particular morning the then acting Chief Presidency Magistrate happened, most curiously enough, to be paying a visit to the Hindu Gymkhana and whom should he see by a mere accident (laughter) but the Commissioner of Police, and of course, he had the Riot Act in his pocket like a good Magistrate. So the acting Chief Presidency Magistrate came out and met the Commissioner of Police and the latter said: "You had better wait here because

something is happening and we may require your assistance."

"When that did happen, these people came on the platform and behaved in a most disgusting way and when Mrs. Besant and others went to Mr. Edwardes and asked for the assistance to which they were entitled, to have that gang of hooligans thrown out of the place, Mr. Edwardes refused to do anything except to go into the pandal and clear everybody out. That was the conduct of the Commissioner of Police on that occasion and it was only owing to the great tact and ability with which their leaders behaved that further trouble was avoided.

"Was that not a most scandalous matter which any Government of its own accord ought to have enquired into? Ought not any self-respecting Government to have insisted upon an enquiry being held into the conduct of Mr. Edwardes and his colleagues? (cheers) More than that the man who went to Government House and made this solemn pledge and afterwards broke it, who went to the Muslim League and joined with those people who insulted English culture and did everything that they possibly could to expose themselves as most objectionable hooligans, that man who was not called to account by the Governor as he would have been by any Governor who knew what his duty was (cheers). But at the very

first dinner party that Lord Willingdon gave after he came back to Bombay, at that time, at Government House, Mr. Suleman Cassum Mitha was an honoured guest. (Loud cries of shame) Were they going to forget that? (Cries of "No, no.") The Bombay Presidency Association, the leading political Association of the Presidency which had been a body recognised by the Government for years, investigated the whole matter and it sent a reasoned representation couched in the most moderate language. It was not done by the Home Rulers, but by men like Sir Dinshaw Wacha, Sir Hormasji Wadia in conjunction with Mr. Jinnah and his friends and a deliberate charge was there made against the Bombay Police of instigating the breaking up of the Muslim League meeting. Would any self-respecting Government sit quiet under such a charge? Did Lord Willingdon send for his police officers and say that that was a most reprehensible thing, a most disgraceful thing and that there must be an enquiry into the matter? No. For a very long time the Presidency Association did not receive a reply from the Government, and ultimately the Government wrote that they did not propose to hold any enquiry. So they rested under that unrefuted charge to this day that their police went to the meeting and hoped to break it up. That was the sort of Governor to whom they were asked to give a certificate, and were they going to give it? ("No, no.")

Mr. Edwardes was removed from his office, and he was given one of those little kicks which had the result of sending people a little higher. It was thought that that was done because the Governor disapproved of what Mr. Edwardes had done, and although the public were not satisfied, and they were still rankling under the insult, they let the matter pass for the time. But now what did they find? Lord Willingdon unveiled the bust of Mr. Edwardes lately and eulogised that Commissioner who was still resting under that very grave charge. When they were asked to give a certificate to Lord Willingdon, were they going to forget that he gave a certificate to Mr. Edwardes? (Cries of "No, no"). Mr. Edwardes was now working day and night —the speaker hoped he was also working at night as Secretary of the Indo-British Association (laughter)—to frustrate the legitimate rights of the Indian people. They were not going to forget all that and condone it." (Cheers).

Other such speeches by various eminent leaders followed in quick succession. A number of letters from the public were published in the local papers both for and against the "Willingdon Memorial." Letters were exchanged between the anti-Requisitionists and the Sheriff of Bombay, the former maintaining that the Sheriff had no authority to sanction such a meeting and the latter determined

to allow the meeting to be held. At last the day came and on the 11th of December 1918, arrangements were made in the Town Hall, Bombay, for conducting the function meant to bid farewell to Lord Willingdon.

It was seven o'clock in the morning when the leaders of the anti-Requisitionists arrived at the Town Hall and were received with loud cheering by a band of two or three hundred of their supporters, who had arrived on the scene some time previously and were waiting on the roadside in front of the Elphinstone Gardens. Overnight it had been ascertained that no one would be allowed on the Town Hall steps until the doors were opened. The whole place was in charge of a large force of the police and a letter addressed to the Commissioner of Police had failed to elicit a reply to the questions that were addressed to him in regard to the arrangements. A few hours passed in strange expectation. At ten o'clock the doors were opened, the intention to do so being communicated only a few minutes beforehand to the leaders of the opposition, who immediately took places in the queue which had been kept for them by their supporters. Thus the first persons to enter the Hall were Jinnah, Jamnadas, Horniman, Umar Sobhani, K. M. Munshi, Tairvee, Banker, P. K. Telang, Syed Husain, Pothan Joseph and a large following of supporters. In

the meanwhile, it may be mentioned here, Suleman Cassum Mitha had arrived on the steps and assumed command of the important operations for packing the meeting which had apparently been entrusted to him.

The first victory was gained after the anti-Requisitionists secured the front place in the queue and the second when they succeeded in resisting the audacious attempt to thrust them into the back seats. Headed by Jinnah they insisted upon their right as the first-comers to take whatever seats they chose and after some argument their claim to occupy the seats in the central part of the Hall was conceded. Mrs. Jinnah was on the hall-steps controlling the volunteers.

By five o'clock the Hall was uncomfortably packed. Intervening between the front rows of seats occupied by the leaders of the anti-Requisitionists and the platform was a phalanx of about one hundred Europeans, Parsis and Anglo-Indians, serving as the "stewards" of the meeting, which made it extremely difficult—and ultimately impossible—for the former to see or be seen on the platform. The arrival of the Sheriff at this time provoked an extraordinary scene. Those seated on the platform and standing on it in front raised vociferous cheers which were immediately drowned by long-continued shouts of "Shame, Shame." Other leaders of the

Requisitionist party received the same demonstration and counter-demonstration from the two parties.

At about 5-30 in the evening quiet was restored. Immediately after the reading of the notice convening the meeting by the Sheriff, Horniman rose and addressed the Sheriff for the purpose of making a constitutional protest; the latter, however, refused him a hearing and his voice was drowned in the shouts of those on and near the platform supporting the Requisitionists. While Horniman was still standing and endeavouring to be heard Sir Dinshaw Wacha rose and moved that Sir Jamsetjee Jijibhoy should take the chair. This was apparently seconded by Sir Fazalbhoy Currimbhoy. Without any attempt to put the motion to the vote, and ignoring Horniman's shouted protest that this party wished to propose an amendment that Telang be elected chairman, Sir Jamsetjee walked into the chair.

From that moment the fate of the meeting was sealed. For about twenty minutes the anti-Requisitionists continued their shouts of "No, no" in protest against this arbitrary procedure and Sir Jamsetjee's taking of the chair while the stewards, volunteers and other supporters of the platform shrieked and yelled in derision, hurling challenges and epithets at the anti-Requisitionists. What was going on on the platform, nobody could see or hear. It is

said that Sir Jamsetjee put the resolution of appreciation of Lord Willingdon from the chair and declared it carried. The farce came to an end when the Commissioner of Police appeared on the platform, and backed by a force of police ordered the Hall to be cleared. The anti-Requisitionists headed by their leaders proceeded to leave the Hall. Unnecessary violence was used by the police in clearing the Hall and several of the anti-Requisitionists were assaulted, including Jinnah, Subedar and others.

When the leaders of the opposition appeared on the steps, after leaving the meeting, they were received with a long continued roar of cheers from a huge crowd. Horniman in coming down was seized and carried shoulder-high round the circle amidst a scene of extraordinary enthusiasm, the occupants of the crowded verandahs and balconies also cheering and waving handkerchiefs. The demonstration reached its culmination in the Apollo Street where Jinnah, Jamnadas Dwarkadas and Horniman delivered brief speeches from the windows of an Insurance Company's office. "Gentleman," said Horniman, "you are the citizens of Bombay, and not the hirelings and foreigners packed into the Town Hall. Today we have won a victory. It is, in fact, a victory for democracy. If we had not been sure of your support at our back we could not have achieved this triumph."

Horniman then said that a full account of what happened during the whole day at the Town Hall would be related to them at the meeting that night at Shantaram's Chawl. Amid ringing applause the speaker made way for Jinnah, who in answer to repeated calls from the audience said, "Gentlemen, you are the citizens of Bombay. You have today scored a great triumph for democracy. Your triumph today has made it clear that even the combined forces of bureaucracy and autocracy could not overawe you. December the 11th is a Red-Letter Day in the history of Bombay. Gentlemen, go and rejoice over the day that has secured us the triumph of democracy."

A huge demonstration was then staged at Shantaram's Chawl that night. The three leaders who were instrumental in smashing the farewell meeting of the day gave an account of the proceedings of the meeting in the Town Hall. Horniman then moved the following resolutions:—

I. "That this meeting of the citizens of Bombay enters its emphatic protest against the conduct of the Sheriff of Bombay and the conveners of the proposed Willingdon Memorial meeting for the arbitrary and disgraceful methods employed by them in refusing to afford proper facilities to the opponents of the meeting and contriving by mean and despicable methods to pack the meeting."

II. "That this meeting of the citizens of Bombay condemns and protests against the cruel and partial conduct of the police in carrying out their work in regard to the arrangements of that meeting."

III. "That this meeting of the citizens of Bombay condemns the administration of Lord Willingdon and protests against the proposal to raise any sort of memorial to Lord Willingdon for his services."

Syed Husain seconded the resolution in a brief Urdu speech, in the course of which he remarked that Jinnah had by his share in the events of the day set an example of magnificent leadership of which not only Bombay but India might well be proud.

The resolutions were then put to the meeting and carried unanimously.

Jinnah—the incarnation of public will, the embodiment of national pride, the symbol of unity, the champion of the cause of the oppressed, the upholder of civil liberties—was at once a hero, admired, honoured, praised, nay, loved by all. Public addresses were presented to him, garden parties were held in his honour, and every one suggested that this unique service rendered by him to his people should be commemorated. The advocates and members of the Bar were proud to own him and held a public function

to celebrate his leadership. His remarkable courage, his extraordinary gift of leadership were acknowledged and accepted by every one, and the long train of events and a chain of popular ovation that followed this wonderful victory of Bombay citizens over officialdom, did but due justice to him.

An attorney of Bombay, Lam by name, came out in the papers with a suggestion that a fund be raised in honour of this great leader, in which every one of his admirers should contribute at least one rupee, so that a memorial be raised for the purpose of perpetuating that happy occasion. Lam's suggestion in the form of a letter was published in the *Bombay Chronicle*, and as it is valuable for its facts and sentiments it is given below in full :

> Sir, I have read with great pride and deep emotion the reports of yesterday's meeting and I cannot withhold my high admiration for the bold and fearless leadership of Mr. Jinnah in inaugurating a new era in the public life of Bombay.
>
> The real issues of this fight have been clouded by the excitement caused by the conduct of the Police and the supporters of the Sheriff's meeting. We have, therefore, to look at the result in its proper light, and the true test of the success of Mr. Jinnah and his noble band of supporters lies in two great facts. The first is that the

supposed public meeting lasted only a few minutes and no speeches could be made by the supporters of Lord Willingdon. To call this a meeting of the citizens of Bombay to vote a memorial is sham and hypocrisy. The second great truth is that no Sheriff will henceforth make bold to flout public opinion and call a meeting in the name of the citizens of Bombay. That is an achievement of which Mr. Jinnah and his followers have reasons to be proud.

If, as a result of the meeting, anybody deserves a memorial it is Mr. Jinnah whose fine leadership and fearless courage have marked a great epoch in the public life of Bombay. He has shown the spirit of our late lamented leaders like Dadabhai Naoroji and Gopal Krishna Gokhale.

We should mark our great appreciation of Mr. Jinnah's service by raising a fund in which each of his supporters should contribute one rupee. That rupee will come not from a man's pocket but from his heart. If we had our own way we would raise a statue of Mr. Jinnah to be placed in the Town Hall of Bombay, for Mr. Jinnah has for ever laid low the tyranny of Town Hall meetings held in the name of the public. His name will be cherished for ever as the great Indian who stood for the rights of the people. Town Halls in every city are symbols of their true public spirit. That spirit never existed in Bombay, but Mr. Jinnah has

established it on firm basis in yesterday's proceedings. We ought not to allow this occasion to pass without a fitting tribute to Mr. Jinnah. A souvenir ought to be presented to him to mark the everlasting services he has rendered not only to Bombay but to the whole of India.
Yours etc.
113 Esplanade Road.
B. D. LAM.

Lam's idea met with much enthusiastic response from the public and voluntary contributions began to pour in at once with great rapidity, as a result of which, within a short time, was built the famous Jinnah People's Memorial Hall, which still stands as the symbol of Bombay's affection for this great man.

But, alas, today in that very Hall, things are discussed and plans made for how best to undermine the influence of the one personality who inspired the sentiment that raised it.

CHAPTER XI

SUPPRESSION AND OPPRESSION

The year 1918 saw the publication of two important reports regarding India, which will always be remembered as landmarks in the political history of this country. The first was the report of the Committee appointed by the Government, the previous year, under the Presidentship of Sir Sidney Rowlatt with Kumaraswami Sastri and Provash Chandra Mitter as members, "to investigate and report on the nature and extent of the criminal conspiracies and to advise as to the legislation, if any, necessary to enable the Government to deal effectively with them"; and the second incorporating the Reform proposals of Montagu, as a result of his tour of India. The first report gave rise to a widespread protest throughout India, and when it came for consideration before the Imperial Legislative Council, Mohammad Ali Jinnah placed before it the aspect which, as he himself said, no speaker had put before the House. "I take it, my Lord, that the sole purpose of appointing the Rowlatt Committee was not to discover that there were criminal conspiracies in the land. They are there. They have existed. But, I take it, that the real object of appointing that Committee was to determine how to deal with

this kind of offences when we return to normal times, for the extraordinary remedies and powers which are now placed in the hands of Government by what may be termed 'war legislation,' will only last during the period of the war and no more, and their main purpose was to suggest what legislative measures should be adopted with a view to deal with these conspiracies. The Government had the evidence before them, they had all the papers before them and they knew perfectly well that this kind of offence was being committed every day. The object was to find out what method and measures could be adopted to deal with these offences.

"Now, therefore, I do not attach much importance to that part of the Rowlatt Committee Report which does no more than put in a readable form the narratives of various conspiracies that have existed, the various crimes that have been committed. But, we are concerned more with the part which recommends the measures that we should adopt.

"Now, my Lord, it was said by the Hon. the Home Member that these are not political matters but crimes. With the utmost respect, I beg to differ from him. These are political matters and very much so. You must remember that in India before 1905 there was no such thing as criminal conspiracies of a revolutionary character. I believe that the first bomb that was thrown in India was after 1906,

not before that. Therefore, my Lord, the question that we have to consider is this. What has happened to India? Why was there all of a sudden in 1906 this signal of a bomb throw? And why is it that since 1906 up to 1918 you have these vast developments of this anarchical movement? What is the cause of it? It is no use for those who represent the Punjab to come forward and make a defence of their policy. It is no use coming and saying that the dangers existed and they have dealt with these dangers in a most magnificent manner. But, I would urge upon this, my Lord, that there is discontent, there is dissatisfaction, there is unrest. Might I say, my Lord, that it is partly, if not wholly, due to your policy? What has been your policy? You might consider it a little. The Hon. Sir Verney Lovett says that you recognise that unless the people of this country will co-operate with the Government, unless they will help, there will be no other method so effective. I hope I am correctly reproducing the effect of his speech, but as you ask us, the people of India, to co-operate with you, we ask you to consult us, and believe me—and I believe I am speaking on behalf of a very large body—that nobody is more anxious than we are to prevent these crimes. But you cannot ask us to help you to prevent crimes when you lay down the policy without consulting us. If you want us to co-operate with you then associate us with you and give us a certain

amount of control, responsibility, in the policies which you are laying down for the Government of this country.

"My Lord, that is an aspect which no speaker has put before the Council. The whole question has been dealt with on the footing as if some criminal tribes had sprung up in our midst and were a source of danger which it was the duty and business of everybody, without considering any further or anything more in connection with it, to lay down laws and the moment you enact laws on the Statute Book you think you have solved the problem. I say, my Lord, that no amount of laying down of laws on the Statute Book would solve this problem. You will have also to change your policy, and considerably, before you can remove the causes. Well, my Lord, with some of the recommendations of the Rowlatt Committee I may agree, but there are others which, I am quite sure, no civilised Government will accept. No civilised Government will ever dream of putting these recommendations in the form of laws, and I refer particularly to the preventive measures which the Rowlatt Committee has recommended."

On the 8th of July, Montagu-Chelmsford Reform Proposals were published and were received in various moods by all the politically-minded classes of Indian public.

Three distinct schools of thought again came up. The 'Moderates' accepted them just as the proposals stood, but asked for considerable alterations to be made in the final Act. The 'Home Rulers' were not willing to accept them unless drastic modifications were incorporated which in their opinion would suffice for the time being. They thought that under the circumstances and in view of the tremendous pressure that was brought upon Montagu and his colleagues the Reform Proposals were probably the best that could be secured, in the midst of the various contending parties existing in India. The 'Extremists,' however, who formed the bulk of the Congress, declined to accept the proposals at all. On the 23rd of July Mohammad Ali Jinnah issued a press statement stating his point of view.

"In expressing opinion on the proposals of Lord Chelmsford and Mr. Montagu no Congressman can overlook the Congress-League Scheme adopted at Lucknow by the joint sessions of the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League, so far as the principles and essentials embodied therein are concerned. These are:

(1) Broadening of franchise and direct representation.

(2) Substantial majority of elected members in the Legislature.

(3) Control over the Executive.

(4) Control over the Finance and Fiscal policy.

(5) Military and Navy, or in other words, the Defence and Foreign policy were excluded from the representatives of the people for the present.

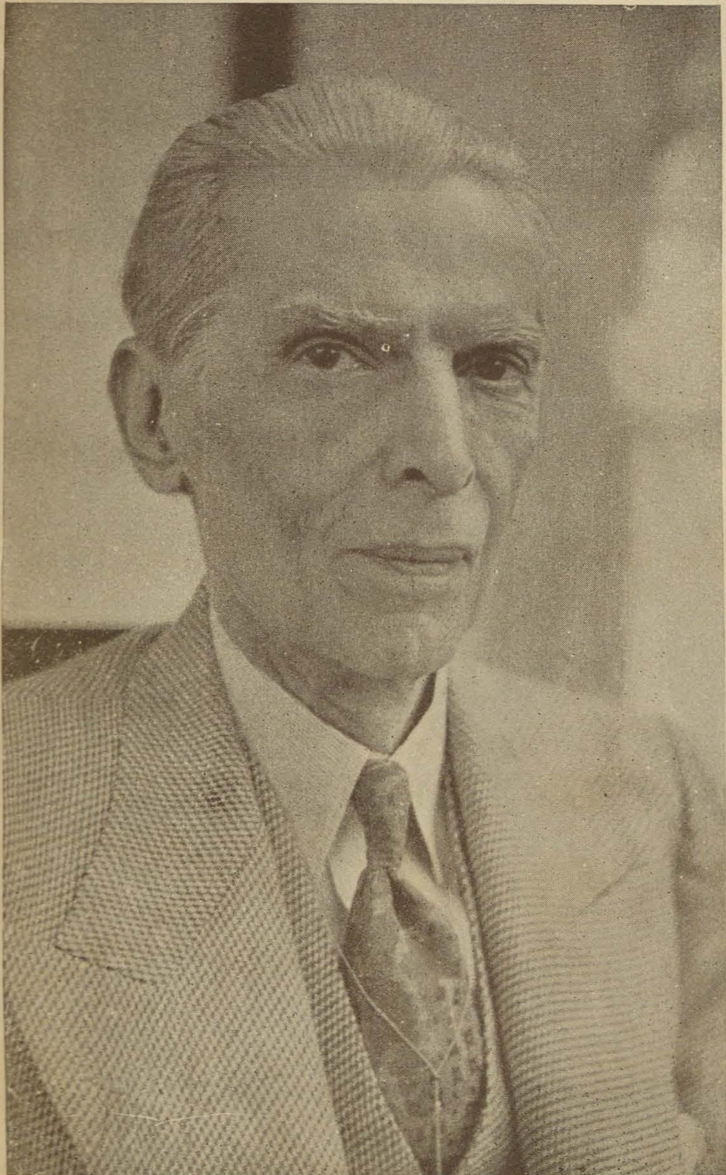
"It was after the Scheme was put forward by the people that the pronouncement of the 20th of August, 1917, was made by His Majesty's Government.

"Now, I for one look more to the principles and essentials of a scheme than to its framework as suggested by one or the other of the representative bodies or individuals. It is very natural that in the solution of a problem of this kind, we have had many suggestions and proposals, but the Congress-League Scheme is the crystallization of Indian National opinion and it has held against any other. At least we have got the proposals of the Government and we are called upon to discuss them.

"The announcement of His Majesty's Government and the authors of the Report invite full and public discussion. The proposals are not like the laws of the Persians and the Medes, but they may be modified upon further discussion and that is clearly indicated by the Report itself in paragraphs 225 and 354.

"I must, at the outset, say that the Report and the Proposals are weighty, well-considered and cannot be rejected summarily. Great effort has been made to face the problem, but I cannot say that I am satisfied with the Scheme, as it stands, and I feel that it will not be acceptable to the people unless it is modified in important respects. I know that great difficulties were put in the way of Mr. Montagu in India and he was called upon to deal with one of the most intricate and complicated problems that any country had ever to face. His personal examination of the problem and situation has advanced the original proposals of the Government of India to a considerable extent; but, I think, he has been unduly influenced by the alarmist section, which has resulted in innumerable restrictions being put on the concessions that have been made to the people. The consequences are that the Government of India is left practically as it was and the advancement of the Provincial Governments does not go far as it should. It might become worse when the Reserved departments, and Transferred departments are decided upon. The advancement would be worthless unless in major provinces like Bombay all the departments, except the Police and Justice, are transferred. I am willing to accept this only as a transitional stage with a view to show that for the present the maintenance of law and order may be reserved to the Government, since the argument has been advanced

(THE MOST IMPORTANT MAN IS ASIA)



Qaed-e-Azam

that, after all, we are going through an experimental stage, but it must be made clear that after five years there should be no reserved subjects.

"The task of deciding what departments should be transferred, is to be entrusted to a committee and it is most important as to who should constitute that committee. I hope that the personnel of the committee when constituted will be such as will command the confidence of the people. This remark applies with equal force to the formation of all the committees.

"If these modifications are made in the Scheme of Provincial Governments regarding major provinces, I am sure that the Scheme will be acceptable to the people so far, and, I feel confident, speaking for the Bombay Presidency, that it is quite ripe to take up that responsibility.

"Then, with regard to the Government of India, I cannot accept the principle that for purpose of progressive realisation of responsible Government we must confine ourselves to the province as the unit. For this I see no warrant in the announcement of the 20th of August, 1917. The report in one place says: 'We recommend no alteration at present in the responsibility of the Government of India to Parliament excepting so far as transfer of subjects to popular control in the provinces *ipso*

facto removes them from the purview of the Government of India and the Secretary of State, but we do provide greater opportunities for criticising and influencing the action of the Government of India and also a legislature which can develop when the day of responsibility comes into machinery adopted to the new motive power.'

"Then again, in one breath, the Report condemns the evils of the Morley-Minto Reforms, inasmuch as it says, 'If on the other hand we delayed this step until the training period was over, we should have encouraged the elected members of the Council in the habits of irresponsible criticism which have been the bane of the Morley-Minto Councils and from which it is our aim to escape.' In the next breath, they lay down the formula that 'the Government of India must remain wholly responsible to Parliament and saving such responsibility, its authority in essential matters must remain indisputable, pending experience of the effect of the changes now to be introduced in the provinces. In the meantime the Indian Legislative Councils should be enlarged and made more representative and opportunities of influencing Government increased.' Is this escaping from the bane of placing the representatives in the position of irresponsible critics which is complained of against the Morley-Minto Reforms?

"The Government of India, when

constituted under the Scheme, will be able to initiate any measure or bill and carry it through on the certificate of the Governor-General-in-Council—no matter what the opinion of the representatives in the two Houses, and the Council of State may be—resolutions passed by the Assembly to have effect only as recommendations.

"The procedure laid down in the Scheme reduces the Assembly as a whole and the representatives of the people in the Council of State to the position of irresponsible critics because the certificate of the Governor-General-in-Council can carry a measure through regardless of the opinion of the representatives.

"Further, paragraph 84 of the Report says that the fiscal legislation would be subject to the procedure recommended in respect of Government bills quoted above. The budget will be introduced in the Legislative Assembly, but the Assembly will not vote it. Resolutions upon Budget matters and upon all questions whether moved in the Assembly or in the Council of State, will continue to be advisory in character.

"Therefore, it is clear that in most vital matters, the demand of the Congress-League Scheme is not met, *viz.*,

"(1) In the Government of India, representatives have no control over the Executive.

"(2) Any measure initiated by the Government can pass through on the certificate of the Governor-General-in-Council.

"(3) Fiscal policy of the Government cannot be touched and in matters of fiscal policy the Government of India will be subject to the control of the Parliament and we know that India has lost more than once on the floor of Parliament because His Majesty's Government, either Liberal or Conservative, cannot resist British interests as can be cited with reference to Manchester and Lancashire.

"(4) The budget as a whole or any allotments in it cannot be changed or altered by the legislature.

"Therefore the position of the representatives of the people in the Government of India will practically remain the same ; namely, what the authors of the Report are pleased to call, 'influencing the Government', which we have been doing since 1892.

"I cannot accept the interpretation that the announcement of His Majesty's Government meant that progressive realisation of responsible Government was to be confined to the Provinces exclusively. If responsible Government is to be attained, then the progress must be made simultaneously in the local self-government and Provincial Government and the Government of India. I would, there-

fore, strongly urge that the certificate of the Governor-General-in-Council should not apply except to measures and bills which affect peace, tranquillity and safety of the country. All other departments should be left to the Legislature. If any Government Bill is rejected or materially amended in a matter regarded by the Government as vital, it should be competent for the Government to refer it to a Council of State, constituted on the lines laid down in the Scheme, which would pass the bill in any form which it thought fit. The bill as amended by the Council of State could be sent back to the Legislative Assembly and if rejected by them again, the Governor-General-in-Council can refer the matter to a joint session of two Houses and the decision of the joint session would be final. The idea underlying this suggestion is that disputes should be settled after a time has been given for full discussion, but by a body where there is a small majority of elected members. The Government can always persuade twelve elected members to vote for the Government on matters other than a measure affecting the tranquillity and safety of the country. Similarly all financial proposals relating to the sources of income and items of the expenditure should be embodied in bills. Every such bill and the budget as a whole should be sumbitted for the vote of the Legislature. In case of difference between the Assembly and the Council of State the procedure of the joint session should be followed.

"Thus, it is clear, that the certificate of the Governor-General is unnecessary except in matters affecting peace, tranquillity and safety of the country. The report itself contemplates this in paragraph 281, as follows: 'In time to come, if and when the procedure by certification becomes unncessary, the Council of State will become, as in other countries, a purely revising chamber, and differences between the two chambers will be adjusted by a joint sessions.'

"But that time can only come after ten years. A whole decade is a long period to wait for an advance and some of the departments of the Government require immediate development; for instance, agriculture, commerce and industry, education, taxation, currency and banking, etc. No advance can be real unless potent voice is given to the people to deal with these matters. These are some of the important changes that should be incorporated in the Scheme. There are many other matters of detail with which I do not wish to deal now.

"I would, therefore, urge upon my countrymen that we should treat the Report and the Scheme with due respect and serious consideration and concentrate all our forces and energies with a view to focus the public opinion of the country in the direction of securing these vital changes; then, if we are all agreed, I feel confident that the Scheme will have to be modified. Criticism and discussion are expressly invited on the subject and the Cabinet and Parliament will give effect to the changes that we may seek."

A special session of the Congress was held in Bombay in the month of August under the Presidentship of Syed Hasan Imam of Bihar. The Moderates, however, had decided not to attend the Congress session, and on the arrival of the President in Bombay he postponed it for a couple of days in order that the Moderates could be won over by negotiations. A formula was consequently arrived at and a few of the Moderates attended the Congress, but veteran leaders like Dinshaw Wacha, Surendranath Bannerjea, Bhupendra Nath Basu, Ambika Charan Mazumdar were absent. Gandhi too was not able to come owing to illness.

The Bombay Congress characterised the Reforms as " inadequate, unsatisfactory and disappointing," yet agreed on resolutions which would widen them and make them workable, thus accommodating the point of view of the Moderates. The Moderates held their separate conference in October, and asked for very similar amendments but added no condemnatory words.. The Anglo-Indians (old style) who were at first up in arms to condemn the proposals as measures nothing short of revolutionary changes, had now awakened to their peculiar position and demanded their place in the new order of things. The All-India Muslim League also held its session in Bombay under the leadership of Maharaja of Mahmudabad and passed similar resolutions.

The Montford Scheme came up for discussion before the Imperial Lagislative Council in September 1918, and Surendranath Bannerjea moved the following resolution: " This Councial, while thanking His Excellency the Viceroy and the Secretary of State for India for the Reform proposals, and recognizing them as a genuine effort and a definite advance towards the progressive realization of responsible Government in India, recommends to the Governor-General-in-Council that a Committee consisting of all the non-official members of this Council be appointed to consider the Reforms Report and make recommendations to the Government of India." V. J. Patel raised an objection saying that he could not find his way to consider the resolution as a whole, for the first part was difficult for the Extremist Party to support. Lord Chelmsford agreed to divide the resolution in two parts, which were ultimately put to vote separately. Both the parts, however, were carried with only two dissenting votes.

Heartened by the support of the Council, Montagu proceeded to put his proposals on the Parliamentary anvil. In accordance with the wishes of the Montford Report, two committees were appointed to go into the details of the electorates of the Provincial and Imperial Legislatures and to find a scheme of the division of the administrative portfolios of the Government into "reserved"

and "transferred" subjects. Lord Southborough and Mr. Feetham came out from England for the purpose. Among Indian members who served on Southborough Committee were Surrendra Nath Bannerjea and Srinivasa Sastri; and those who served on Feetham Committee were Tej Bahadur Sapru and Chimanlal Setalvad.

On November 11, 1918, came the Armistice. The Allies had been completely successful and Persident Wilson and Prime Minister Lloyd George had declared that the principle of self-determination would be applied in the international post-war settlement. The Delhi Congress, therefore, in Christmas of that year, met under a new atmosphere under the presidentship of Madan Mohan Malaviya. The All-India Muslim League also held its session side by side under the presidentship of A. K. Fazlul Haq. The Eextremists had, however, got a complete hold over the Congress by now, and they were determined to have their own way even at the risk of disregarding the views of the Moderates and the compromise that was effected at Bombay. Gandhi also attended this Congress. A resolution was passed totally rejecting the Reform Proposals and it was decided to send a deputation to England to act upon the Delhi decision. A bitter controversy arose between the Extremists on the one hand and the Moderates and

the Home Rulers on the other, and the latter two openly came out to oppose the former. The Muslim League demanded the safety and restoration of the Muslim States in the Middle East the sovereignty of which was threatened in the post-war settlement. Dr. Ansari as the Chairman of the Reception Committee warned that Musalmans would not allow either the Government or the Hindus to shift the ground and make any changes in the right of separate representation. The exclusion of Muslim members from the Imperial Conference was also deprecated.

As a sequel to the recommendations of the Rowlatt Committee two Bills were introduced in the Imperial Legislative Council early in 1919. To the first one—a Bill to make provision in special circumstances to supplement the ordinary criminal law and for the exercise of emergency powers by Government V. J. Patel moved an amendment to the effect "that consideration of the Bill be deferred till six months have elapsed after the expiry of the terms of office of this Legislative Council." Mohammad Ali Jinnah supported the motion on the following grounds : "My first ground is this," said he, "that it is against the fundamental principle of law and justice, namely, that no man should lose his liberty or be deprived of his liberty, without a judicial trial in accordance with the accepted rules of evidence and procedure. My second reason is

that this is a wrong remedy for the disease, namely, these revolutionary crimes, although I for one am prepared to accept as correct the findings of facts of the Rowlatt Committee that the crimes of the nature indicated have been committed. My third ground is that the powers which are going to be assumed by the executive, which means substitution of executive for judicial, such powers are likely to be abused, and in the past we have instances where such powers have been abused. My fourth ground is that there is no precedent or parallel that I know of in any other civilised country where you have laws of this character enacted. My fifth ground is that this is a most inopportune moment. At this moment, I can tell you that high hopes have been raised among the people of this country because we are on the eve of great and momentous reforms being introduced. My sixth ground is that the proposed measures are of a permanent character and not temporary measures intended only to deal with an emergency of a temporary character. And the last ground why I oppose these measures is that, my Lord, I do not wish to state it by way of any threat or intimidation to Government, but I wish to state it because it is my duty to tell you that, if these measures are passed you will create in this country from one end to the other, a discontent and agitation the like of which you have not witnessed, and it will have, believe me, a most disastrous

effect upon the good relations that have existed between the Government and the people."

The House divided and the motion was negatived. The Council then decided that the Bill be referred to a select committee. The second Bill amending the Indian Criminal Law was also, after due debate and opposition from the Indian members, referred to a select committee.

Once again, a country-wide agitation ensued as a mark of protest against the repressive measures which the Government of India proposed to adopt. Meetings were held, addresses were read, articles and pamphlets were written, lectures and speeches were delivered all over India. Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, from his Sabarmati Ashram, issued the famous *Satyagraha* pledge which a band of his co-workers had already signed. The pledge ran as follows :

> "*Being conscientiously of opinion that the Bills known as the Indian Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill No. I of* 1919 *and the Criminal Law (Emergency Powers) Bill No. II of* 1919, *are unjust, subversive of the principles of liberty and justice, and destructive of the elementary rights of individuals on which the safety of the community,*

as a whole and the State itself is based, we solemnly affirm that, in the event of these Bills becoming law and until they are withdrawn, we shall refuse civilly to obey these laws and such other laws as a Committee to be hereafter appointed may think fit, and we further affirm that in this struggle we will faithfully follow truth and refrain from violence to life, person or property."

The news of the new movement of passive resistance had electrified the country. Gandhi had invested the agitation against the Rowlatt Bills with a new and grim meaning. Mrs. Annie Besant, however, had deleted from the pledge the words " such other laws," on the ground that agitation against these laws did not necessitate the disobedience of other laws.

The Government of India was, however, determined to carry its intentions through in spite of the vigorous opposition and protest from the public, and the first bill became law. Hurt to the core by such an attitude on the part of the Government, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, once again, gave to India a lead in registering his emphatic active protest against the Act, and wrote the following famous letter to the Viceroy:

Mount Pleasant Road,
Malabar Hill,
Bombay,
28th March 1919

"Your Excellency,

"The passing of the Rowlatt Bill by the Government of India, and the assent given to it by your Excellency as Governor-General against the will of the people, has severely shaken the trust reposed by them in British justice. Further, it has clearly demonstrated the constitution of the Imperial Legislative Council, which is a legislature but in name—a machine propelled by a foreign Executive. Neither the unanimous opinion of the non-official Indian members nor the entire public opinion and feeling outside has met with the least respect.

"The Government of India and Your Excellency, however, have thought it fit to place on the Statute Book a measure admittedly obnoxious and decidedly coercive at a time of peace, thereby substituting the executive for the judicial.

"Besides, by passing this Bill, Your Excellency's Government have actively negatived every argument they advanced but a year ago when they appealed to India for help at the War Conference and have ruthlessly trampled upon the principles for which Great Britain avowedly fought the war.

"The fundamental principles of justice have been uprooted and the constitutional rights of the people have been violated at a time when there is no real danger to the State by an overfretful and incompetent bureaucracy which is neither responsible to the people nor in touch with real public opinion and their sole plea is that the powers when they are assumed will not be abused.

"I, therefore, as a protest against the passing of the Bill and the manner in which it was passed tender my resignation as a member of the Imperial Legislative Council for I feel that under the prevailing conditions I can be of no use to my people in the Council nor consistently with one's self-respect is co-operation possible with a Government that shows such utter disregard for the opinion of the representatives of the people in the Council Chamber, and for the feelings and sentiments of the people outside.

"In my opinion, a Government that passes or sanctions such a law in times of peace forfeits its claim to be called a civilised Government and I still hope that the Secretary of State for India, Mr. Montagu, will advise His Majesty to signify his disallowance to this Black Act.

Yours truly,

M. A. JINNAH

The second Sunday after the passing of

the Rowlatt Bill was proclaimed by Gandhi as a day of humility and prayer. The public was asked to observe *hartal* (cessation of business) and undergo one day's fast. It fell on the 30th March, which was consequently observed as the *Satyagraha* Day in Delhi and many other places, where the news of the ultimate change of the day to 6th of April had not reached. Delhi saw a serious tragedy. Furious rioting had broken out and Police and Military opened fire, as a result of which many were killed and injured. Writing about the Delhi disturbances Gandhi hoped "that next Sunday at *Satyagraha* meetings, all speeches will be free from passion, anger and resentment." He, however, added, "the movement depends for its success entirely upon perfect self-possession, self-restraint, absolute adherence to Truth and an unlimited capacity for self-suffering. Before closing this letter, I would add that in opposing the Rowlatt legislation, the *Satyagrahis* are resisting the spirit of terrorism which lies behind it and of which it is a most glaring symptom. The Delhi tragedy imposes an added responsibility upon *Satyagrahis* of steeling their hearts and going on with their struggle until the Rowlatt legislation is withdrawn."

Then came the final day—the 6th of April. Hundreds and thousands of people flocked together in their respective districts, throughout India, in order to observe the

national day of "fast and prayer," and eventually gathered in big squares. Local leaders made fiery speeches urging Hindus, Muslims and others to unite together under the leadership of Gandhi so that he might compel the Government to wipe off the Black Act from the Statute Book. Everywhere a resolution drafted by Gandhi himself was adopted amidst tumultuous acclamations and was despatched by letter or wire to the Government of India. The next day after having attended the "national ceremonies" in Bombay, Gandhi started for Delhi *en route* to Punjab but as soon as his train reached Palwal station he was served with an order prohibiting his entry into Punjab, on refusing to obey which he was taken under police custody and an Inspector of Police accompanied him back to Bombay. The news of Gandhi's arrest excited the public all the more. People not only observed *hartal* everywhere but went through the streets compelling indifferent or antagonistic people to step down from taxis and carriages, to close shops and theatres, and to attack any Englishman they found on their way. Thus the trouble began at Ahmedabad with the burning of a cinema-poster, as the Parsee owner did not agree voluntarily to cancel the shows for the day. The police and the military were very soon on the spot, and one police officer becoming impatient at the threatening crowd closing round his party lashed some people near

him with a long whip. The people began to throw stones at the few English soldiers posted on the opposite side of the road. But for the timely intervention of a few local leaders the crisis would have been precipitated there and then. The Collector's office and the Telegraph Office were quickly set on fire by enraged people, and the other crowds went through the city burning all the police stations they could lay hands on. An unfortunate English sergeant was caught up in the crowd in the main thoroughfare of the city and was done to death. Martial Law had to be proclaimed to deal with the situation.

In Amritsar, on April 11, two popular leaders were arrested and taken away in custody. A crowd, unarmed and peaceful, with the usual Hindu signs of mourning, went towards the Civil Lines to ask whither they had been removed; they were stopped by soldiers, and sat down on the ground, mourning. In a foolish panic, they were fired on, and several were slain. It was the signal for an outburst of mad rage. The crowd collected sticks and bars, rushed back into the town and attacked banks, Government buildings, the railway station; some five Englishmen were killed, and an Englishwoman was assailed and beaten, but rescued by some Indians. By the evening, all was quiet again. On the next day, many arrests were made, and there was no resistance; all was peace; the sudden fury provoked by

the foolish firing had died down, and there need have been no more trouble.

But troops had been sent for, and General Dyer and his men arrived on the evening of the 12th. On the next day, Sunday, April 13, he went through a few streets, and forbade the holding of any meetings. A meeting had been arranged for that day in a large open space, Jallianwala Bagh, and people came, a holiday crowd, from the surrounding country. General Dyer was told a crowd was gathering, and he did nothing. Jallianwala Bagh was a walled-in space, with some five narrow outlets. When twenty thousand people had gathered in it, he marched down with machine-guns, but even the widest of the passages were too narrow for their entry. He had forty men, with a supply of ammunition, and the ground sloped down slightly from his station. He gave the order to fire into the crowd, and himself directed the fire so as to close the small outlets with dead and dying, as the amazed and panic-stricken crowd fled before the hail of bullets, men, women, little children—tiny shoes of children in arms were found scattered about afterwards! When his ammunition was exhausted, he and his soldiers marched away, leaving the ground strewn with dead and wounded. No appeal to hospitals was made. As he said afterwards, that was not his job; he meant to give a lesson. None might be out after dark, on pain of

death; there were no doctors; the wounded lay through the terrible heat of the night, a few brave persons creeping in with water—a mere drop in the ocean of thirst.*

Then ensued a real reign of terror in the Punjab. Martial Law was proclaimed. People were made to "crawl." Orders were issued compelling every Indian to accord to British officers "wherever met, the salutation usually accorded to Indian gentlemen of high social position in accordance with the customs of India." Students of Lahore were directed to attend roll calls four times a day. Public flogging became common, and similar other punishments were inflicted on men, women and children not excluding innocent persons.

Soon after Gandhi had learnt of the public disturbances in Delhi, Amritsar, Ahmedabad and other cities he decided to suspend *Satyagraha* and proclaimed it with a voluntary imposition of a three days' fast as a mark of penitence for this "Himalayan miscalculation," and appealed to his countrymen to undergo a similar fast for one day. He discovered that the country, as a whole, was not yet prepared and trained to conform to his prerequisite conditions of non-violence and pacifism which he held were essential for those who took part in the movement. It was necessary, therefore, that before restarting any such movement a

*Mrs. Besant.

band of trained workers should be available who could explain to the people the principles and methods of this unique art. "With these thoughts filling my mind," he writes, "I reached Bombay, raised a corps of Satyagrahi volunteers, and with their help commenced the work of educating the people with regard to the meaning and inner significance of Satyagraha. This was principally done by issuing leaflets of an educative character bearing on the subject. But whilst this work was going on, I could see that it was a difficult task to interest the people in the peaceful side of Satyagraha. The volunteers, too, failed to enlist themselves in full numbers. Nor did all those who actually did enlist take anything like a regular systematic training. As the days passed by, the number of fresh recruits began gradually to dwindle instead of growing. Thus I realized that the progress of the training in civil disobedience was not going to be as rapid as I had at first expected."

Soon after Parliament had reopened in 1919, Montagu introduced into the House of Commons his India Bill; and after Montagu's Bill had been read a second time in the House of Commons early in June, a select Committee was appointed from both Houses of Parliament to examine its provisions and hear evidence. The Committee consisted of the following gentlemen: Lord Selborne (Chairman), the Duke of Northumberland, Lord Crewe,

Viscount Middleton, Lord Sydenham, Lord Islington, Lord Sinha, Mr. Montagu, Sir John Rees, Mr. Ben Spoor, Mr. Acland, Mr. Ormsby-Core, Sir Henry Craik, and Sir Thomas Bennett.

A large number of deputations went from India to England for propaganda work in connection with the Government of India Bill. All the shades of opinion were represented. Yakub Hasan, Jinnah and Bhauguri gave their evidence on behalf of the Muslim League. A large number of official members were also examined and opportunities were also provided for spokesmen of the depressed classes and the Indian Christian community. Mrs. Sarojini Naidu appeared on the question of women's franchise. If there was any point on which the bulk of the witnesses appeared to agree in a more or less general way, it was in support of the Curtis brand of dyarchy, on which Mr. Montagu as Secretary of State for India had inflexibly set his heart.*

After the recess, the Committee met again in October, and their report was submitted to Parliament about the middle of November. As soon as the report was received by Parliament the third reading was also rushed through. In the House of Lords, however, a slight difficulty was felt but ultimately Lord Sinha succeeded in piloting the Bill with

*P. C. Ray: *Life and Times of C. R. Das.*

the help of Lord Curzon and Lord Selborne. The Bill got through the Houses of Parliament about the middle of December and on the 23rd of the same month received the Royal assent. A Royal Proclamation was issued along with His Majesty's assent, and paved the way for what then appeared to be a smooth working course for transitional system introduced by the Government of India Act of 1919.

CHAPTER XII

NON-CO-OPERATION

During the Great War, Indian Musalmans had shown their concern about the post-war settlement and the policy that would be followed by the Allies with special reference to Turkey and the Khilafat. The British Prime Minister, Lloyd George, by his various public utterances, had assured the world that Allies had no intention to dismember Turkey and that after the war all Turkish possessions would be made over to her. Muslim India was following with expectant eyes the march of events. The peace, however, brought tutelage and not freedom to the Holy Cities of Islam. Signs were manifest that the greed of imperialistic supremacy and economic exploitation had got the better of British judgment, and the long and oft-professed principles of justice and righteousness were being gradually and deliberately forgotten. Nothing short of complete disintegration of Turkey was being aimed at. This would have meant the passing off of all the Holy places of Islam into non-Muslim hands, and the reduction of Turkey to a subordinate state. Muslim India was, therefore, enraged to the core and demanded the pledges, given to them, to be honoured. A nation-wide protest followed

and all sections of thought united to form a national front on the issue.

The eleventh session of the All-India Muslim League was held in Delhi in December 1918. Mr. Fazlul Haq, the League President, reminded the British Government of their promises held out to Musalmans and viewed with alarm the British attitude. "I will not, therefore, be surprised," said he, "if they take this opportunity finally to dispose of Turkey and her problems in Europe, and herein lies food for the amplest reflection. As the years roll on, the position of the Musalmans in India becomes more and more critical, and demands our most anxious thought and care. In my humble opinion we should invoke divine help and guidance in all sincerity and meekness of heart; above all, we should renounce any lurking spirit of strife and quarrel with other communities, and seek their help and assistance in our troubles and difficulties."

A marked feature of this session was the re-emergence of *Ulema* on the political stage, but they decided to form an association of their own, under the guidance of the celebrated Maulana Mahmudul Hasan, who had returned to India during the war from Malta, where he was interned for alleged anti-Government activities. Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Hind, so founded, was the first step towards the encouragement of sectional opinion, as it recognised the

establishment of a school of leaders completely free from the popular control and popular criticism.

The word *Ulema* is assigned to the scholars of the tenets of Islam, as a sort of a degree but not as a class-distinction. Islam does not assign to them a separate place among mankind as is assigned to Brahmins in Hinduism and priesthood in Christianity. Even Islamic propaganda is not their sole monopoly; for every Muslim is enjoined to propagate the teachings of Islam. They are more or less like specialist lawyers, who may be consulted on points of Islam in law and its interpretation, but they are not its sole licensed advocates. Even their interpretation is not binding on one who seeks it. It is, therefore, not right to call them "divines" in the sense the word is generally understood. Many of the contemporary Hindu and Muslim writers have been unconsciously led to this error from which even Gandhi and Jawaharlal Nehru are not free.

The Jamiat supported the cause of Khilafat, for which a movement was already afloat. Maulana Mohammad Ali and Maulana Shaukat Ali after coming out of the jail took its reins in their hands and were hailed by all Musalmans as the fittest persons to do the job.

The refusal by the British Government of the Muslim demand for the inclusion of a

Muslim member at the Imperial War Conference increased the apprehensions of Muslim India and doubts were entertained about a secret treaty for the partition of Turkey. The London League took up the issue and on the 14th of July 1919, a deputation waited on the Secretary of State for India in this regard.

In November 1919 was called at Delhi a joint conference of Hindus and Muslims and a general letter was issued to leaders of all shades of opinion to attend. The letter went on to say that not only the Khilafat question but also the question of cow protection would be discussed at the conference. Both Hindu and Muslim leaders attended this conference in large numbers and among other resolutions, one suggesting some kind of non-co-operation with the Government was adopted in which Gandhi had a considerable hand.

A month later, however, after the Government of India Bill became an Act, the Congress and the League met at Amritsar. But while the League passed a resolution similar to that adopted by the Khilafat Conference at Delhi, the Congress, which was attended by Gandhi also, passed a resolution recommending the working of the new Constitution and co-operation with the Government. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, who had by now returned from England after having given his evidence before the Joint Parliamentary

Committee attended the sessions. The League also demanded the recall of Lord Chelmsford, the then Viceroy.

On return from Amritsar, however, Gandhi began to feel the pulse of Hindus in order to find out the possibility of preparing them to throw in their weight with the Khilafat movement. It is clearly manifest that although some leaders were willing to stand by and support the Musalmans in their hour of need, Hindus in general could not see any reason why they should bother themselves about a question which seemed to them purely of a religious nature. "Now that the Punjab and the Khilafat issues had been practically decided by Government," says Indulal Yajnik, "we of the old guard of Gujarat and Bombay were compelled under the furious onslaughts of Mr. Gandhi's propaganda to face the issues fully and squarely. Mr. Gandhi, we felt, being such an orthodox and conscientious Hindu, might feel compelled to so thoroughly identify himself with the Muslim standpoint on the Khilafat question. Most of us, however, were sceptics, if not thorough atheists. We prided ourselves on having risen superior to or defied the superstitious beliefs and hoary customs that shackled the minds and lives of the masses of the land. We had never bargained with Mr. Gandhi to join him in any semi-religious or religio-political movement. We had joined him solely with a view to

following him on any path of advanced direct action to wage purely political fights with a view to securing national liberty. The question that then faced us, was—if the Khilafat campaign could be construed even as a purely political fight (for we were then really called upon to fight under the banner of the Khilafat Committee under Mr. Gandhi's leadership, as the issues of the Punjab and the political freedom had been left over for the consideration of the Congress that was to meet after a few months). In fine, what was our duty at this supreme moment ? This was the question that began to be seriously discussed in all political circles that were frankly perplexed and amazed at the increasing militant tones and tactics of Mr. Gandhi, who began really to surpass even the most orthodox Mohammedan in his fanatical zeal for the cause of Islam."

He states further : "Now, trying ourselves to rid India of the 'suzerainty' of the British Empire, we could not share Mr. Gandhi's enthusiasm for imposing the suzerainty of the Turkish Sultan over the outlying provinces of Mesopotamia and Arabia. Perhaps we thought Mr. Gandhi had the excuse of his ignorance of Turkish history. Otherwise he might have known better about the efforts of the Turkish revolutionaries and about the almost ceaseless rebellions in which the Arabs of Mesopotamia, Palestine and other provinces

had broken out against oppression and barbarous misrule of the Turks in the past centuries. In any event we felt that the corrupt and effete monarchy of Constantinople had received an irretrievable blow from the results of the last War, and was bound to collapse under the joint attacks of the Allies, the Turkish revolutionaries, and the rebel Arabs. What remained, therefore, to us, to consider was the question of the independence of the Arab States and the Turkish revolutionaries from British authority and interference. And the question that faced us then entitled us to fight for another people who were also being enslaved by the British.

"I had frequent discussions during these months with my friend and colleague, Mr. Vallabhai Patel, with whom I was then staying. He shared my anxiety and perplexity to the full. Often he told me:

'Gandhiji is writing once again with full steam, but his articles today miss the fire and lack the point of his rousing appeals issued during the Rowlatt Act campaign last year.' Nor was he inspired with any enthusiasm for the Khilafat cause which Mr. Gandhi was trying to infuse in us with ever-increasing passion every day. Vallabhai has a keen sense of humour, and we had many unholy jokes and laughs over the sacred cause of Khilafat. 'Imagine,' he said once, 'our

fighting for the independence of the Arabs of Arabia and Palestine, Syria and Mesopotamia when we ourselves are held as slaves under the British bayonets in our own land. Isn't it funny beyond words?' And so we went round and round the subject, and yet our perplexities and anxieties only increased with Mr. Gandhi's determination to bring the matter to a conclusion.

"We were indeed burning with a feverish enthusiasm to fight the Government over a clear political issue fairly and squarely. But Mr. Gandhi's articles and speeches in those days were so completely warped and befogged with pompous religious formulas and obscurantist dogmas that they thoroughly left us cold."

Between January and March 1920, Gandhi explained his programme of non-co-operation and its implications to the public through the columns of his "Young India." Four progressive stages were laid down for the purpose of carrying on the agitation to a successful end. The first was to be the resignation of titles and honorary offices ; the second, the withdrawal from all Government services save Police and Military ; the third, the withdrawal from the Police and the Military ; the fourth, the suspension of payment of taxes to the State. But in spite of all his efforts it seems that Hindus in general refused to line up with

the Musalmans on the question of Khilafat alone, even though the movement was entirely in the hands of Gandhi, who was considered, at the time, the specialist of such an agitation. Accordingly, in June, he extended its scope to cover, in addition to the Khilafat question, the question of the Punjab in order to bring in Hindu support; and almost simultaneously with the publication of the non-co-operation programme in July 1920 the aim of the movement was extended further to cover *Swaraj*. The question of cow protection was also introduced for the same purpose.

The proposed terms of peace with Turkey were published on the 14th May 1920, and in India, they were accompanied by a message from the Viceroy to Muslims. The message recognised that the terms were faulty and would no doubt cause pain to the Musalmans, but nevertheless asked them to brace themselves with patience and resignation the misfortunes of their Turkish brethren. The publication of the peace terms caused deep indignation among Muslims and the whole nation was ablaze.

In the meantime the Muslims embarked upon a plan of *Hijrat* (flight) to Afghanistan as they felt they could not stay in India under the British after the peace with Turkey. The movement started in Sind and spread to the North-West Frontier. A ghastly collision took

place between the emigrants and the Military at Kacha Garhi which exasperated the people, and in the month of August it was estimated that 18,000 people were on their way to Afghanistan. But very soon the Afghan authorities forbade the admission of the pilgrims and a set-back was given to the idea, after considerable loss of life and sufferings.

In September, the All-India Muslim League and the Congress both met at Calcutta in special sessions—one under the presidentship of Mohammad Ali Jinnah and the other under that of Lala Lajpat Rai—to discuss the burning question of the day. In his address Jinnah explained: "We have met here principally to consider the situation that has arisen owing to the studied and persistent policy of the Government since the signing of the Armistice. First came the Rowlatt Bill—accompanied by the Punjab atrocities—and then came the spoliation of the Ottoman Empire (cries of shame) and the Khilafat. The one attacks our liberty, the other our faith. Now, every country has two principal and vital functions to perform—one to assert its voice in the international policy, and the other to maintain internally the highest ideals of justice and humanity. But one must have one's own administration in one's own hands (hear, hear) to carry it on to one's own satisfaction. As we stand in matters international, India's voice is represented through His

Majesty the King of England's Government, although nominally we happened to have two Indians who were supposed to represent us, but they were neither the chosen nor the accredited representatives of India. The result was that notwithstanding the unanimous opinion of the Musalmans, and in breach of the Prime Minister's solemn pledges, unchivalrous and outrageous terms have been imposed upon Turkey (shame) and the Ottoman Empire has served for plunder and broken up by the Allies under the guise of Mandates. This, thank God, has at last convinced us, one and all, that we can no longer abide our trust either in the Government of India or in the Government of His Majesty the King of England (applause) to represent India in matters international."

Regarding the non-co-operation programme he said, " Mr. Gandhi has placed his programme of non-co-operation, supported by the authority of the Khilafat Conference before the country. It is now for you to consider whether or not you approve of its principle, and approving of its principle whether or not you approve of its details. The operations of this scheme will strike at the individual in each of you, and, therefore, it rests with you alone to measure your strength and to weigh the pros and the cons of the question before you arrive at a decision. But once you have decided to march, let there be

no retreat under any circumstances (no, no, never).

"In the meanwhile there sits in Olympian Simla a self-satisfied Viceroy who alternately offers his sympathies to us unfortunate Musalmans, and regrets Mahatma Gandhi's 'foolish of all foolish schemes' (shame) being fortified with a 'charter' from His Majesty's Government sent in a recent Despatch from 'Home.' This is the 'changed angle of vision' on which we heard such high-sounding phrases during those critical stages of the war when India's blood, India's gold was sought and unfortunately given—given to break Turkey and buy the fetters of the Rowlatt legislation.

"One degrading measure upon another, disappointment upon disappointment, and injury upon injury, can lead a people to only one end. It led Russia to Bolshevism. It has led Ireland to Sinn Feinism. May it lead India to freedom (applause).

"The unsatisfactory character of the 'Reforms', evolved by the timidity of Mr. Montagu and the prejudice of Lord Chelmsford, marred by its own Rules and Regulations, and worked under the influence of Lord Chelmsford's Government, offers us 'license for liberty' and if I may quote words of a well-known author, this is what he says: 'License for liberty does not compensate for liberty.' We

may have Indians as Lieutenant-Governors and Governors and for the matter of that Viceroys. That is license but that is not liberty (hear, hear). What we want is true political freedom of the people and no posts and positions in Government."

He spoke thus on the questions of freedom and Government policy in a manner which has always won him the highest place among the patriots of our land, and secured for him the admiration of all. But on the question of Non-co-operation, when a representative of the Press approached him, he clearly stated that he had not been able to study the programme of the movement and until he had done so, he could not make a categorical pronouncement.

In India, however, two schools of opinion had shot up in the political field. One led by Gandhi stood for non-co-operation and had nothing to do with the Reforms Act, the other led by Tilak " proposed to work the Montagu Reforms Act for all it is worth and for accelerating the grant of full responsible Government, and, for this purpose, it will, without hesitation, offer co-operation or resort to constitutional opposition, whichever may be expedient and best calculated to give effect to the popular will." A month later, however, he had arrived at a decision quite independently. While he had his sympathies with the movement, as it was supposed to be directed against the policy

of the Government, he disapproved of the method adopted for the purpose. To him it all meant chaos, anarchy and bloodshed. Closing down of the schools and colleges meant a serious loss to the nation and he could never agree to it. He believed further that the conditions obtained in India left no scope for this agitation to be successful. He was convinced that the greatest benefit could be derived if the movement could be directed by peaceful and constitutional methods. While, therefore, he restrained himself from seeking election to the Council, he deplored that a great opportunity should be lost at the cost of India's progress.

The crisis, however, came in October. Mrs. Annie Besant had resigned the Presidentship of the All-India Home Rule League, and Gandhi was elected its new President, who proposed to change its creed and rename it as Swaraj Sabha.

A general meeting of the members of the All-India Home Rule League was held on the 3rd of October 1920 in Bombay when Gandhi presided. After the notice convening the meeting was read, the consideration of the draft of the amended constitution of the League was taken up. The first article regarding the change of name was agreed to without discussion. But regarding Article 2, covering the objects of the Sabha, there was a heated

discussion lasting over two hours. The article as drafted by the Sub-Committee of the Central Council of the League ran thus :

> (*i*) To secure complete Swaraj for India according to the wishes of the Indian people.
>
> (*ii*) To carry on a continuous propaganda with a view to organising the people for peaceful and effective action to achieve such Swaraj, and to take such action whenever necessary.
>
> (*iii*) The interpretation of the word " Swaraj " as used herein shall not be extended beyond Article 1 of the Congress Constitution.

There were five amendments, two of which were tabled by Jinnah, and when the discussion came up before the meeting he moved his first one that Article 2 should read : " To secure Swaraj for India in conformity with Article 1 of the Constitution of the Indian National Congress " and clauses 2 and 3 should be omitted. In a somewhat lengthy speech he explained the reasons that had led him to press the amendment and said that the constitution of the Home Rule League laid down three things ; first, that they were to secure self-government within the British Commonwealth and were to be recognised as

free and equal members of the Commonwealth; second, this goal was to be attained by constitutional methods; and third, that the British connection was to be maintained and strengthened. Any change in their constitution, therefore, which went against these two propositions, namely, the attainment of complete self-government within the British Commonwealth and the adoption of constitutional methods was a position which could not be taken up, especially as they were affiliated to the Indian National Congress. Therefore, they could only lay down as their object, the securing of Swaraj in conformity with Article 1 of the Congress Constitution. The proposed change meant the declaration of complete independence and severance from the British Commonwealth and it did not lay down the form of Government but left it to the wishes of the people of India. The methods laid down in the proposed change would be peaceful, but not necessarily constitutional and law-abiding. Moti Lal Nehru spoke against the amendment and after a considerable discussion, it was lost when put to the vote.

Jinnah then moved his second amendment to the effect that Swaraj shall mean responsible government. This one too, on being put to the vote, was lost. After this he pointed out that the constitution of the Home Rule League could not be changed except by the Council and that when three-fourths of

the members voted for it. The chair, however, ruled that this meeting was competent enough to carry the changes with a bare majority, and, in reply to Jamnadas Dwarkadas, the Chairman announced that "it was open to any member, be he life member or otherwise, to resign his membership if he thought he could not remain a member of the Sabha under its altered constitution."

The local Press in general supported Mohammad Ali Jinnah on this point and popular opinion went against changing the constitution of the All-India Home Rule League now called the Swaraj Sabha, and he along with nineteen others resigned from the League as they thought the "ruling validating the said procedure was both incorrect and arbitrary." The matter, however, did not end there. Gandhi wrote back to Jinnah saying that his action was justified. Jinnah in his turn replied back, and at last expressed his opinion categorically regarding the recent activities of the Congress and Gandhi.

"I thank you for your kind suggestion offering me 'to take my share in the new life that has opened up before the country.' If by 'new life' you mean your methods and your programme, I am afraid I cannot accept them; for I am fully convinced that it must lead to disaster. But the actual new life that has opened up before the country is

that we are faced with a Government that pays no heed to the grievances, feelings and sentiments of the people; that our own countrymen are divided; the Moderate Party is still going wrong; that your methods have already caused split and division in almost every institution that you have approached hitherto, and in the public life of the country not only amongst Hindus and Muslims but between Hindus and Hindus and Muslims and Muslims and even between fathers and sons; people generally are desperate all over the country and your extreme programme has for the moment struck the imagination mostly of the inexperienced youth and the ignorant and the illiterate. All this means complete disorganisation and chaos. What the consequence of this may be, I shudder to contemplate; but I for one am convinced that the present policy of the Government is the primary cause of it all and unless that cause is removed, the effects must continue. I have no voice or power to remove the cause; but at the same time I do not wish my countrymen to be dragged to the brink of a precipice in order to be shattered. The only way for the Nationalists is to unite and work for a programme which is universally acceptable for the early attainment of complete responsible government. Such a programme cannot be dictated by any single individual, but must have the approval and support of all the prominent Nationalist leaders in the

country ; and to achieve this end I am sure my colleagues and myself shall continue to work."

At Nagpur the programme of Non-co-operation was to be finally discussed. The Congress and the Muslim League both held their annual sessions there in the month of December. But while the Congress gained more and more power by the help of the Khilafat Committee, the League was being pushed aside as a nonentity, and its platform was almost deserted. The names of the Khilafat Committee and the Congress were almost synonymous and both were under the direct control and supreme leadership of Gandhi. The Nagpur sessions of the League, therefore, did nothing more than duplicating the Khilafat programme, and the *Bombay Chronicle* writing editorially suggested that the best comment it could make on the League session was to reproduce the article written on the Congress sessions.

The historic sessions of the Congress met under great enthusiasm and excitement. No less than 14,582 delegates were present, out of whom 1,050 were Muslims; 169 women attended as delegates. It was presided over by the veteran leader from the South, C. Vijayraghavachariar of Salem. Colonel Wedgwood, Holford Knight and Ben Spoor attended the Congress as fraternal delegates from the

Labour Party of England and conveyed the Party's greetings and sympathy. C. R. Das brought a contingent of about 250 men to oppose the resolution on Non-co-operation. But the whole affair was a great personal triumph for Gandhi. The President himself "in spite of his lukewarm attitude towards non-co-operation, co-operated with Gandhi passively, and always made a point of vacating the chair whenever a resolution came up before the open House with which he was not in agreement." C. R. Das and Lajpat Rai were not only won over, but the one moved and the other seconded the main resolution. The whole atmosphere changed suddenly and when the question was put to the House, fifty thousand of the audience recorded their approval, but out of this vast assemblage there was only one tall, thin man who had the courage to stand up to signify his dissent. Every one was astonished. Col. Wedgwood exclaimed with satisfaction that India was on the road to freedom as she was capable of producing at least one man who had the strength of character enough to stand by his conviction in the face of a huge opposition and no support whatsoever. This man of steel nerves was no other than Mohammad Ali Jinnah. He believed that the religious frenzy with which the whole political atmosphere was charged and which governed all spheres of activity would ultimately result in confusion, and would do more harm than good to India in general and

to Musalmans in particular. He was not against agitation, he was not against revolt. He stood for protest and demonstration of public disapproval of the policy followed by Great Britain both in the domain of international and Indian problems, but he disapproved of the method adopted by his countrymen in this regard, and, therefore, he remained aloof from the movement.

It was a crucial moment in the life of India as a country, and for a leader like Mohammad Ali Jinnah, who had impressed in the past his countrymen, one and all, as the greatest patriot and as the most courageous champion of Indian freedom, as the ambassador of unity and as the upholder of rectitude, justice and fairplay in the political arena, who had sponsored and defended the rights and interests of the Musalmans and who was hailed as the symbol of the dynamic spirit of Young India, it was difficult to keep himself out of a movement which raged throughout the length and breadth of the country. His attitude was seriously called into question, and when he was chosen as one of the speakers on the life of Gokhale on the occasion of the death anniversary of the departed patriot, Jinnah was expressly requested to enlighten his countrymen on the subject.

The following is an extract from a report published in the " Bombay Chronicle " of the 21st of February 1921 :

"The sixth anniversary of the late Mr. G. K. Gokhale was held at the premises of the Servants of India Society on Saturday evening (19th). The Hon. Mr. R. P. Paranjpye presided and Mr. M. A. Jinnah, Mr. M. R. Jayakar and Prof. Wadia were the speakers.

"The President at the outset said it was six years that they lost their great leader, the late Mr. Gokhale and it was not too much that they still feel loss. They assembled that evening to mourn his loss and perhaps to recall some lessons which might be learnt from his bright career.

"Mr. Jinnah who on arrival was given an ovation received another when he rose to speak. He said that the life and career of the late Mr. Gokhale were so well known that any word from him would not make him greater and if anybody wanted to tell about the career of that great patriot he could really fill volumes. Mr. Gokhale had started his career in the Fergusson College and served that College till he rose to be the Principal of it and it was in the fitness of things that another distinguished countryman of ours who had—not very long ago—been the Principal of that College, should preside over that evening's meeting. In saying so he referred to Mr. Paranjpye who had now risen to the post of a Minister under the new Reforms.

"From a number of years' association

and co-operation with Mr. Gokhale in the Council, the speaker could tell them that there was no other man so intelligent and refined as to surpass him. Along with the best of politics Gokhale was a man of great nobility who rendered great and noble services to his country till the last day of his life. Although Gokhale was no more with them and although it was now six years that they lost him still his noble career remained as an example before them and so he (speaker) said and if one wanted to write one could write volumes about him. It was a pity that Gokhale had been taken away from them just at the prime of his life and it was a pity there were few men like him to be with them in such a critical time as the present one. But speaking on the subject that evening one could not forget the present situation of the country and he asked to be permitted to say a few words.

PRESENT SITUATION

Continuing Mr. Jinnah said, he had been asked by several friends and colleagues as to why he remained silent at the present critical moment. He said, admittedly the present situation of our country was fraught with great difficulties. On the one hand they had a Government which had persistently and deliberately followed a policy that had wounded the self-respect of the country. He

did not think there was any man in the country with the slightest intelligence who had not condemned this policy. There was the great European War in which they shed their blood and gave their money and after the armistice they got the reward of the Rowlatt Act. There was not a single Indian member who did not oppose this Act, but even yet it was passed. He on that occasion felt so strongly that he thought it was not possible for any Indian with a litte self-respect to co-operate with the Government that forced upon the country an obnoxious Act at a moment which required quite a different sort of treatment. The Rowlatt Act was opposed first and all the troubles followed thereafter. People in all parts of the country have from time to time passed resolutions condemning the Act and up till very few days the position was that the Government told them in their last communique which the Home Member, Sir William Vincent, could not refrain from referring to, and that was that if the moderate and the sober opinion in the country did not come out and put down what the Government considered the extremist movement they would resort to repression. They found now a change of policy on the part of Government when they accepted the resolution of Mr. Jamnadas. But what did it really come to? Was there a real change of policy? Was that going to satisfy the intelligentsia of India? (Cries of "No, no.") It seemed to him that although

he had accepted the resolution and had posed as a spokesman of the Government to give the indication of a change of policy, in his heart of hearts Sir William Vincent was an absolute bureaucrat and that the Government were still under the impression that the people of India could be ruled and controlled by the old policy, *viz.*, by giving concessions with the one hand and repression with the other. He ventured to say this that if the Government wanted real peace and good-will and if they honestly and sincerely desired the co-operation of the people they must radically change their policy and that could only be done, not by small men who happen to be at the helm of the Government but by a great big man and by a generous change of policy. So long as that was not forthcoming he was convinced more than ever that the intelligentsia of India would not be satisfied. He was not going to forget the question which he put to himself many times that what was going to be done. He could tell them honestly and sincerely that he was convinced in his mind that the programme of Mahatma Gandhi for whom he had great respect and admiration was taking them to a wrong channel. (Cries of "No, no.")

The speaker: "I know you can say so, but I cannot agree.

LEADING TO WRONG CHANNEL

Continuing Mr. Jinnah said if it were

not taking them in the wrong channel and if he could be convinced so, he would have been the first man to join it. It was not that he had not the greatest respect and reverence for Mr. Gandhi and the men who were working with him because he knew of what noble stuff they were made. He worked with them and was firmly convinced of their noble and sacrificing spirits. He was proud of them and there were many more like them in India now. But he would tell them again—he might be right or he might be wrong—that the programme of Mahatma Gandhi was taking them to a wrong channel. (Cries of "No, no.") In his opinion what they wanted was a real political movement based on real political principles and based on the fire which burnt in the heart of every man for his motherland. So long as they had not that as the basis, their programme was defective.

REFORMED COUNCILS

Proceeding further the speaker said, if they had not boycotted the Councils, if they had today twenty or thirty of their best men in the Assembly Mr. Jamnadas' resolution would not have been compromised. They would have fought it to the bitter end.

A voice: "It would not have been allowed."

The speaker: "I know that, but remember in that case Government would have been obliged to suspend the Assembly in less than a year of its existence." (Cheers).

Continuing the speaker said, he could not understand why they should not go to the Council and fight face to face with the bureaucrats. He, therefore, said that they were not proceeding according to the constitutional and political methods. Referring to the conditions in Czarist Russia, he asked as to what happened in Russia. The Czar created the Duma and continued in his despotic attitude and what happened then? He (the Czar) found it impossible to go on with the Duma and had to suspend it. So the Government of India also would have to suspend the Legislative Council if they persisted in going against the will of the country. If they entered the Council they would have surely carried Mr. Jamnadas' resolution. The Government might not have carried the resolution into action but the people's representatives could make the further work of legislation impossible until the Government yielded.

He hoped they would bear him out as to what happened after the Indian members came out of the Council after the passage of the Rowlatt Act. Did their leaders not hold meetings after meetings all over the country and practically killed the Rowlatt Act?

BOYCOTT OF SCHOOLS

Now there was another item in the programme. The boys were asked to come out of the Government-aided schools and colleges, but he asked what would they do after withdrawing themselves from the schools and colleges? He had discussed this question with several of his friends and he had not received any definite answer. Mr. Gandhi had asked them to spin the wheel for four to five hours a day and then if any time was available to devote it to learn Hindi. He emphatically said that this was not really a political movement. The first essential thing for any country to resist the Government was to mobilise the forces. Germany made preparation by mobilising her forces for forty years before she came out to fight. What was India's mobilisation and what was her strength? Mr. Gandhi had asked them to come out of the schools and colleges and then to go to villages. But what to do there?

A voice: "To educate the masses."

The speaker: "Young men, take it from me, the villagers know things better than you."

"If they were going to regulate everything in their country by the doctrine of non-violent non-co-operation he was afraid they were forgetting human nature. They were

forgetting that they were human beings and not saints. If they really wanted to serve their country at the present moment they must let the political movement go on and their foremost and fundamental work should be to raise the level of the average man of the country (hear, hear). Mr. Gandhi's programme was based on the doctrine of soul-force and it was an essentially spiritual movement. Having for its programme destructive methods which did not take account of human nature and human feeling, non-violent non-co-operation will be a miracle if accomplished. He said before that it was not a political programme though it had for its object the political goal of the country. Such principles and doctrines as were preached and propagated by Mr. Gandhi, were opposed to the nature of an ordinary mortal like the speaker himself. Not one in a million could carry out Mr. Gandhi's doctrine which has its sole arbitrator his conscience. The speaker could not contemplate how long the non-violent non-co-operation could last if all the boys were withdrawn from schools and colleges without substituting them by national schools and colleges. He still hoped the Government would think less of Mr. Gandhi's programme and think more of what the intellectual opinion of the country felt, and he trusted that it would not be very long before a real change of policy was enacted so as to allay and satisfy the feelings of the people who were in entire accord with the

spirit of Mr. Gandhi's movement which, however defective, may be picked up and directed in a channel which might make the Government and administration of the country impossible.

The speaker again said their present situation demanded them to preach political doctrine and no other doctrine. He quoted the instance of Egypt and stated how Zaghlul Pasha called together the men of influence, the men of wealth and the men of power who formed themselves into a committee and directed propaganda work throughout the whole of Egypt. They went on educating the masses, they preached to the men in the street as to what was their Government, what was the condition of their country and how they were ruled. So, the speaker said, that if they raised the level of the average men Government have to listen to them.

Coming to the item of wearing *Khadi* in Mr. Gandhi's programme, the speaker asked how many of the twenty thousand delegates of the National Congress had really boycotted foreign goods up to now? A voice: "None."

Continuing Mr. Jinnah said he wanted to say this even now. They would not succeed by that principle. Their success lay only in the political principle. He could understand their effort when they started mill after mill

and competed with the foreigner like men. That would be the real "boycott" in his opinion. He would appreciate their efforts when they spread education and started factories everywhere. He could not believe that they could be satisfied with "an acre and a cow" at the present age.

TWO ALTERNATIVES

There were now two effective ways of attaining their goal. The first was to put their hands in the pocket and pay for their country and the second was to shed their blood. As a matter of fact they were powerless. Now the only strength and effective strength was money. If Mr. Gandhi in the Calcutta session of the Congress formed a committee to appeal to the 320 millions of their countrymen for funds for national education nobody would have said a word against it. He could have by all means started national schools and colleges and fill them up. There was a large percentage of boys who did not attend schools and he could have filled them up with those boys or he could have withdrawn the school-going boys from the schools and put them in the national ones, but he (speaker) did not like that boys should be withdrawn from the schools and thrown in the streets.

Concluding, Mr. Jinnah said, undoubtedly Mr. Gandhi was a great man and he had more regard for him than anybody else. But

he did not believe in his programme and he could not support it. He might stand out alone but he would say that in his opinion if the movement were directed in a right channel there was great hope. He did not know what Gokhale would have said or done now but he thought Gokhale would not have endorsed this programme had he been spared to live till now.

Towards the close of the year 1921 a bid was made by the Government to enlist the co-operation of those who had been out of the non-co-operation movement. An effective reply had to be given to it. Mohammad Ali Jinnah issued the historic statement to the Press wherein he stated: "The non-co-operation movement is only a symptom and expression of general dissatisfaction, owing to the utter disregard of public opinion and of outstanding grievances. Every country has got an extreme section of opinion but it will be impossible for that section to make any headway if the bulk of the people are satisfied. And my reading of the Indian situation is that, leave alone the bulk of the people, even the intellectual and reasonable section is far from satisfied with the present policy of the Government. It is often said that sober people should rally round the authority. How is it possible for them to support or stand by the Government when the Government has paid no heed to what even they have urged

upon Lord Reading and his Government for the last nine months ? "

Soon after the Nagpur sessions, however, the agitation started by Gandhi and a few others, came in full swing. Titles were renounced by a few. Attempts were made to close down some of the schools and colleges. Law Courts were boycotted at some places. Some lawyers gave up their practice. A number of graduates tore up their degrees. Government servants resigned their posts. Mob fury came into vogue. The arrest of Ali Brothers at Karachi in August added fuel to the fire. The entire Muslim population was enraged, and vigorous repression was resorted to by the Government, and in most cases Muslims suffered heavily. Government's policy of repression excited more fury and the Government was compelled to resort to a stricter and more repressive policy. The result was yet to come. The entire propaganda and ethics of the movement, as has been pointed out before, were based on religious philosophy and principles of soul-force and self-purification. It was, therefore, natural that Hindus and Muslims, whose respective religions are as poles asunder, had altogether different notions about the movement and expected different results. The Muslims were mainly concerned about the Khilafat question to settle which they were inclined to be even militant. To them questions of the Swaraj

were of a secondary nature. The Hindus, on the other hand, concentrated in most cases on Swaraj, which had been promised by Gandhi "inside a year." They were looking forward to an understanding between themselves and their Muslim countrymen that would ultimately further the cause of cow protection. The result was quite evident. History began to repeat itself. Consequences which followed the religious propaganda of Mrs. Besant and Tilak in the past began to manifest before long and communal riots became the order of the day. Agra, Delhi and many places in the United Provinces, Bihar and Bengal were the scenes of bloodiest fight between Hindus and Muslims, and co-operators and non-co-operators. In the Malabar area, Moplahs rose in armed conflict not only with the Government but also with the Hindus. Bombay saw a clash of co-operators and non-co-operators and Gandhi had once again to proclaim a fast in order to induce them to unite. The forecasts of those who opposed the non-co-operation movement were coming to be true. Mohammad Ali Jinnah had hitherto remained a passive spectator of the whole show, but now was the time for him to act. Once more an attempt had to be made to save the situation. Friends of the Congress and lovers of freedom and advocates of justice and peace came forward to act as intermediaries between the Government and the non-co-operators.

An All-Parties Conference was convened at Bombay in the middle of January 1922, with Sir M. Visesvarayya as the Chairman and Jinnah, Jayakar and Nataranjan as Secretaries. This conference unanimously condemned the Government policy of repression, and advised the Congress to abandon the resolution passed at Bardoli, which contemplated the inauguration of mass civil disobedience. It also recommended to the Government "an early convening of a Round Table Conference with authority to make a settlement on the questions of Khilafat, Punjab and Swaraj, and with a view to providing a favourable atmosphere, asking for the withdrawal of notifications under the Criminal Law Amendment Act, banning organisations, and the Seditious Meetings Act, and release of all prisoners convicted or under trial under them as also of the *Fatwa* prisoners. It further asked for a Committee to investigate the cases of persons convicted in connection with the movement under ordinary Law."*

The conference provided a sufficient excuse for the non-co-operators to recede from their position and to see reason. But Gandhi laid down the condition that all political leaders must be released from jails before any pourparleys could begin with the Viceroy. The promoters of the conference, therefore,

*Sitaramayya: *History of the Congress.*

were utterly helpless, as the Viceroy could not see his way to fulfil this condition, and on the 1st of February 1922, Gandhi sent to the Viceroy his final ultimatum. "If you can see your way," wrote he, "to make the necessary declaration within seven days of the date of publication of this Manifesto, I shall be prepared to advise postponement of Civil Disobedience of an aggressive character till the imprisoned workers have, after their discharge, reviewed the whole situation and considered it *de novo*. If the Government make the requested declaration, I shall regard it as an honest desire on its part to give effect to public opinion and shall, therefore, have no hesitation in advising the country to be engaged in further moulding public opinion without violent restraint from either side, and trust to its working to secure the fulfilment of its unalterable demands. Aggressive Civil Disobedience in that case will be taken up only when the Government departs from its policy of strictest neutrality or refuses to yield to the clearly expressed opinion of the vast majority of the people of India."

But before the time-limit of seven days could expire, a terrible incident took place. On the 5th of February, when a procession was being taken out at Chauri Chaura, near Gorakhpur, U.P. twenty-one constables and a Sub-Inspector were rushed at by the mob in a

Police Station and the station and the men in it were set fire to. They all perished in the flames. The tragedy opened the eyes of Gandhi to the realities of the situation to which, among many others, Mohammad Ali Jinnah had invariably drawn his attention. Gandhi realised the blunder he had committed and on the 12th of February the entire movement was called off.

The warnings that Gandhi had received from his mortal countrymen prior to his starting the movement went unheeded, till at last, according to him, God Himself ordained him to restrain himself. " God has been abundantly kind to me," wrote he, on the 16th of February. " He has warned me the third time that there is not as yet in India the truthful and non-violent atmosphere which, and which alone, can justify mass disobedience. He warned me in 1919 when the Rowlatt Act agitation was started. Ahmedabad, Viramgam and Kheda erred : Amritsar and Kasur erred. I retraced my steps, called it a Himalayan miscalculation, humbled myself before God and man ...The next time it was through the events of Bombay that God gave a terrible warning. He made me eye-witness of the deeds of the Bombay mob on the 17th November ...I announced my intention to stop the Mass Civil Disobedience which was to be immediately started in Bardoli .. But the bitterest humiliation was still to come. Madras did

give the warning, but I heeded it not. But God spoke clearly through Chauri Chaura."

A constructive programme was, however, evolved. All that Congressmen and India had to do, was to spin and spin ; and Swaraj would be attained.

On the question of political prisoners also Gandhi did not fail to compromise himself. He said : "But Chauri Chaura has raised another immediate issue, namely, terrible penance of a fierce process of purification, and this penitential purification requires the sacrifice of the imprisoned workers, and the temporary sacrifice of many of our activities which have revived the nation. But such things happen in all wars, much more frequently in spiritual warfare such as ours is claimed to be...When I heard of Chauri Chaura I sacrificed them as the first penitential act. They have gone to jail to be released only by the strength of the people ; indeed, the hope was the Swaraj Parliament's first act would be to open the prison gates. The prisoners can now only gain by serving the full term of their imprisonment."

Jawahar Lal Nehru suggests that "the suspension of civil resistance in February 1922 was certainly not due to Chauri Chaura alone, although most people imagined so. That was only the last straw. Gandhiji has often acted almost by instinct; by long and

close association with the masses he appears to have developed, as great popular leaders often do, a new sense which tells him how the mass feels, what it does and what it can do. He reacts to this instinctive feeling and fashions his action accordingly, and later, for the benefit of his surprised and resentful colleagues, tries to clothe his decision with reasons. This covering is often very inadequate, as it seemed after Chauri Chaura. At that time our movement, in spite of its apparent power and the widespread enthusiasm, was going to pieces. All organisation and discipline was disappearing; almost all our good men were in prison, and the masses had so far received little training to carry on by themselves. Any unknown man who wanted to do so could take charge of a Congress Committee and, as a matter of fact, large numbers of undesirable men, including *agents provocateurs*, came to the front and even controlled some local Congress and Khilafat organisations. There was no way of checking them." Nehru's views in this respect, however, are open to serious question. In the first place Gandhi, judging him from his belief in Truth and Non-violence, could not allow his principles to subserve his policy, and if he really thought that Chauri Chaura could be taken only as a pretext to end a failing movement he would have clearly stated so. In the second place, in the light of Nehru's argument, Gandhi's faith that Chauri Chaura was a warning from God and that the impri-

sonment of political leaders was an act of penitence and also his subsequent penitential fast are reduced to nothing more than mere pretensions.

Nehru further suggests that " there was little behind the excitement and enthusiasm of the people. There is little doubt that if the movement had continued there would have been growing sporadic violence in many places. This would have been crushed by Government in a bloody manner and a reign of terror established which would have thoroughly demoralised the people." This view is also, perhaps, wrong. The fact is that the tragedy of Chauri Chaura occurred before the mass civil resistance was actually launched, in fact before the seven days of Gandhi's ultimatum to the Viceroy expired ; and if, according to Nehru, Gandhi knew that the movement would result in a bloody warfare between the people and the Government, it would mean that Gandhi's sincerity about his ultimatum is highly questionable. Nehru's argument and Gandhi's explanation, therefore, stand in direct conflict with each other and it would seem that Jawahar Lal, in his anxiety to justify the action of Gandhi, has clouded the issues and presented the facts in a coloured perspective ; or it may be, that he had not the means to examine and analyse them in their proper perspective.

It is interesting to note, however, that

although Hindu-Muslim unity was made the central pivot on which the Khilafat agitation was to revolve and although Indian political leaders—Gandhi on the one hand and Ali Brothers, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Dr. Ansari, Maulana Abdul Bari and several other Muslims on the other—were earnestly trying to persuade their respective co-religionists to respect the religious susceptibilities of others, yet the facts go as far as to suggest that the union between Hindus and Muslims was only a sort of a temporary and short-lived workable arrangement for the cause that was supposed to be common. The outbreak of communal riots that almost immediately followed the attempts of our leaders for a real unity of hearts prove this assertion beyond measure. The causes of this have been analysed by many contemporary writers. Some attribute it to the ignorance of the Indian masses. Jawahar Lal has put forward a novel argument. "It is possible, however," says he in his *Autobiography*, "that this sudden bottling up of a great movement contributed to a tragic development in the country. The drift to sporadic and futile violence in the political struggle was stopped, but the suppressed violence had to find a way out, and in the following years this perhaps aggravated the communal trouble. The communalists of various denominations, mostly political reactionaries, had been forced to lie low because of the overwhelming mass support for the non-co-operation and civil disobedience

movement. They emerged now from their retirement. Many others, secret service agents and people who sought to please the authorities by creating communal friction, also worked on the same theme. The Moplah rising and its extraordinary cruel suppression—what a horrible thing was the baking to death of the Moplah prisoners in the closed railway vans—had already given a handle to those who stirred the waters of communal discord. It is just possible that if civil resistance had not been stopped and the movement had been crushed by Government, there would have been less communal bitterness and less superfluous energy left for the subsequent communal riots." Mahadeo Desai, on the other hand, points out that "the policy of 'Divide and Rule' that had received a rude shock during the years 1919-22, again came to the fore, and interested parties played on the narrow prejudices of the ignorant."

But a careful study of the contemporary literature leaves no doubt in one's mind that the religious tinge given by the leaders to the entire atmosphere of the non-co-operation movement and the accompanying propaganda employed to further it, was responsible for the communal upheaval. If our leaders would only have not forgotten the consequences that followed Tilak's activities and Mrs. Besant's writings the entire problem of India would, perhaps, have been different today. But it is

unfortunate that although Tilak and Mrs. Besant had both corrected themselves in their later life, our younger leaders were unconsciously driven into the same error. It may be that the Khilafat question was essentially a religious question for Muslims, but the importation of the question of cow protection by a few zealous Muslims was indeed imprudent, and Gandhi did well to oppose it in the beginning, although he, too, in his anxiety to achieve Hindu-Muslim unity made this the central theme of his writings later.

Gandhi's contemporary writings bear this fact out clearly. "The vast majority of Hindus and Musalmans," wrote he on the 23rd of February 1922, "have joined the struggle believing it to be religious. The masses have come in because they want to save the Khilafat and the Cow. Deprive the Musalman of the hope of helping the Khilafat, and he will shun the Congress; tell the Hindu he cannot save the Cow if he joins the Congress, he will, to a man, leave it." That the communal riots bore the impress of Gandhi's propaganda can also be illustrated from his writings, and the following extract from his article of the 18th of May 1921 is a typical example. "Bihar is the land of promise for Non-co-operation. For, the Hindu-Muslim unity of Bihar is proverbial. I was, therefore, distressed to find that the unity was suffering a strain which might almost prove unbearable.

I was told by all responsible leaders—both Hindu and Mahomedan—who are not given to be panicky, that it was taxing their resources to the utmost to avoid a Hindu-Muslim disturbance. They informed me that certain Hindus, by name Gangaram Sharma, Bhutanath and Vidyanand, for instance, had told the people that I had prohibited the use of meat to any Hindu or Musalman, and that meat and fish were even forcibly taken away from people by overzealous vegetarians. I know that unlawful use is being made of my name in many places, but this is the most novel method of misusing it. It is generally known that I am a staunch vegetarian and food-reformer. But it is not equally generally known that *ahimsa* extends as much to human beings as to lower animals and that I freely associate with meat-eaters."

CHAPTER XIII

CO-OPERATION

Mohammad Ali Jinnah's views regarding the feasibility of the non-co-operation movement were further strengthened when there occurred a serious split in the very ranks of the Congress. In 1922 a section of powerful leaders like C. R. Das and Motilal Nehru had showed inclination of converting the Congress to their point of view on the question of Council-entry. At Gaya the annual session was held that year under the presidentship of C. R. Das, but in spite of his heroic efforts the Congress stuck to the principle of Council Boycott, and Das forthwith tendered his resignation saying that he intended to go against the official resolution and to organise a Swaraj Party. The other group was led by C. Rajagopalacharia and later came to be known as "No-changers."

During the early months of the year 1923 a vigorous propaganda followed and Swaraj Party made a desperate attempt to bring public opinion round to its own point of view. The country was once again plunged into a great crisis. On the one hand communal disturbances had not yet quietened down, and on the other the question of Council-entry fore-

shadowed a bitter struggle between Swarajists and No-changers. India's destiny was entirely in the hands of her leaders and attempts were being made to find the solutions of these two immediate problems. While a number of individual Hindu and Muslim leaders were trying their best to arrive at a compromise over the communal discord, the special sessions of the Congress and Khilafat meeting at Delhi in September were to decide the Council-entry issue.

Mohammad Ali Jinnah, with his characteristic independence of character, had, however, already decided to stand for election as an independent candidate to the Central Legislative Assembly, and on the 19th of September 1923 he issued his remarkable election manifesto to the voters of his constituency, wherein he explained his reasons in the following terms :—

" I am aware that there is a difference of opinion in the country on this point. The Indian National Congress and the Khilafat Conference are at the present moment engaged in Special Sessions at Delhi and shortly their decision will be before the country ; but whether their decision is for Council-entry or against, I, for one, am more than ever convinced that the proper course for us is to send our representatives to the Assembly. I, therefore, venture to appeal to the electorate in which

you are one of the voters; and before I make up my mind finally to submit my nomination as a candidate for the Assembly I wish to know the opinions of the voters, who are, after all, to decide the question ultimately...

"I have purposely not put forward the grounds of my claim to your support, as I feel that my part in the political life in our country since 1906, when I first attended the annual sessions of the Indian National Congress, has been before the public; and ever since I have endeavoured to the best of my abilities and judgment to serve the cause of the people. Of one thing I can assure you, that the popular cause and the welfare of India will be my key-note and the guiding principle in the future as, I hope, it has been in the past. I have no desire to seek any post or position or title from the Government. My sole object is to serve the cause of the country as best as I can."

The Congress, too, ended with a compromise between the Changers and No-changers, and the Swarajists were allowed to proceed with their programme. Consequently, at the election time the Swarajists set up their own candidate in opposition to Mohammad Ali Jinnah and there was one other independent candidate, but the popular opinion went in his favour. The *Bombay Chronicle* dealt with the question editorially and wrote:

"The duty of the Muslim voters of this city who will take part in the election to the Legislative Assembly is no less clear. It is to give their entire support to Mr. M. A. Jinnah. ...If Mr. Jinnah does not belong to a party, the country has chosen him for one of its devoted and most loyal servants...We have had our differences with Mr. Jinnah during the last two or three years. But, if during this period he has not been in the thick of the fight alongside his former colleagues, he has also served the cause by his timely and patriotic reticence what time self-regarding and lesser men than he have either betrayed or neglected it. His brilliant past record, his sterling patriotism, his rare independence which no favour can buy nor any frown diminish, and, above all, his uncompromising fighting spirit mark him out as one worthier than any living citizen of Bombay to be its chosen representative. The Muslim voters of Bombay willing to exercise their franchise will, therefore, honour themselves by returning him at the head of the poll, if not unopposed.

"If Mr. Jinnah is not today a Congressman, he has not, like many others, either betrayed the cause of his country or exploited his disagreement with the Congress for purposes of personal aggrandisement. He remains, therefore, as true a servant of the country as any Congressman and it would be a last-

ing shame if a leader like him were to be deprived of the opportunity of serving his country by carrying on a fight in an atmosphere admirably suited to his temperament and training, merely on petty party considerations..."

Before long, however, the truth was recognised by every one that there was no use contesting an election with Jinnah, and the two candidates who had intended to oppose him were asked by public men to withdraw. On the 14th of November 1923, he was returned to the Central Assembly unopposed, still an independent candidate.

During the same year, there cropped up another question worthy of attention. Indians in Kenya had some legitimate grievances and the treatment meted out to them by the Kenya Government had enraged public opinion in India. The recommendations of the Indian Government had been disregarded by the British Government on this question. But instead an Imperial Conference was called and Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru was invited to represent Indian opinion before it. A large meeting of the citizens of Bombay was called in August to discuss the various aspects of the Kenya question, to consider the withdrawal of Sir Tej from the Imperial Conference as a protest against the attitude of indifference adopted by the British Government and also to examine

the feasibility of India's refusal to participate in the Empire Exhibition which was organised side by side with the Conference. Mohammad Ali Jinnah had taken a leading part in the meeting and his categorical exposition of the Indian case gave rise to a general feeling of satisfaction at the time on this burning question of the day.

Asked by a representative of the "Bombay Chronicle" to express his views on the Kenya Settlement, Mohammad Ali Jinnah said: "My personal view is that India and Indians wherever they may be, will not command any respect so long as India remains a dependency of Great Britain. The Kenya decision only brings home more vividly to the people of India once more that while in their own country they are yet a subject race, it is not possible for them to establish equality of status claiming a share in the government and administration of other parts of the Commonwealth on an equal footing with the White races. The decision is clearly based on the ground of White domination and assumed inferiority of Indians. I do not believe that India has got the slightest chance of ever realising the "citizenship of the Empire" of the British Commonwealth, no matter how often the British Government may make declarations of their desire to treat them so and no matter what pledges they may give from time to time,

until India in the first instance becomes the mistress of her own house.

"It is not much use passing resolutions and making long speeches and holding meetings after meetings except that they are useful for the purpose of instructing and educating public opinion in the country. The first thing that the people of India and especially the leaders must realise is that attainment of Swaraj is the only remedy for most of our grievances. Swaraj cannot be attained by representations nor will it ever be realised so long as we remain divided. Freedom can only be attained by developing character, and habits to run in a team and determination of the people to win it. The first thing we require is unity amongst, at any rate, the leaders of various classes and interests in the country. Secondly, we want great and efficient organisation. To take only one example, viz., of Egypt. The legislature was suspended eleven years ago by the British authorities. Egypt was controlled and governed by executive methods for nearly eight years. The people of Egypt carried on their struggle which reached a point when martial law had to be declared. Egypt was governed by martial law for nearly three years. It was only when hardly any Egyptian was left who would not join the cry which was heard from one end to the other that Egypt was for Egyptians that the British Government realised that it was not

possible to continue the martial law and found it advisable to grant "independence" to Egypt. There was no such thing as Moderate or Extremist, Liberal or Nationalist, Co-operator or Non-co-operator, Christian or Muslim left in Egypt when the demand became irresistible. I hope the Kenya lesson will bear some fruit and will bring about unity and co-operation between the various leaders and the people of India. On purely political basis we should declare openly that "India is for Indians" and carry on the struggle for the attainment of "Swaraj."

Question: What is your opinion in regard to the withdrawal of Indian representative from the Imperial Conference?

Answer: "The difficulties that I feel in asking, in public meeting of citizens, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru to withdraw from the Imperial Conference are as follows: First, we have always maintained from the very beginning that if any Indian is to be sent as representative of the people of India he should be elected at least by the elected members of the legislature. We have always refused to recognise a person nominated by Government as our representative, however eminent and however patriotic he may be. So by asking Sir Taj Bahadur Sapru to withdraw, we may be taken to recognise him as if he were our representative and that we were entitled to call upon him to withdraw. Secondly, what

guarantee is there even after we have taken that course that Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru would resign? And, thirdly, if Sir Tej is asked to withdraw, the ground of withdrawal already exists inasmuch as the Kenya decision is given not by the self-governing Dominions but by His Majesty's Government on behalf of Great Britain and after that decision there is nothing more left to be done for Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru if he is inclined to withdraw. So far he has not done so. Fourthly, if he is to be asked to withdraw although he is not our representative but because he happens to be Indian and as such, why exclude H. H. the Maharaja of Alwar? Fifthly, I am against a resolution which lays down the moment and method of his withdrawal.

Question: Should India participate in the Empire Exhibition?

Answer: " Well, I am not in a position to tell you whether it will be beneficial to India to participate in the Empire Exhibition, but I admit that sentiment plays a very important part in the life of a people just as it does in the case of an individual. As an expression of protest India may refuse to participate in the Empire Exhibition but here again it is more for the commercial men to decide. I feel, whatever may be the public opinion, Government have already spent a very large sum of money and good many of the exhibits have already been sent

and I doubt very much whether the Government of India will, because of the expression of public opinion, abandon the participation in the Empire Exhibition. And even if the Government of India were responsive to the public opinion, their views may be brushed aside by His Majesty's Government as was the case in regard to their representation concerning the Kenya question itself. I may add all these things, no doubt, convey and demonstrate a clear expression of protest on the part of India, but I once more want to repeat that the people of India should be united, and they should organise and concentrate their entire energy and attention on one central issue, *viz.* India for the Indians."

The year 1923 introduced in Congress politics for the first time the important element of internationalism. C. R. Das at Gaya had indicated the lines in the following words: "Even more important than this is participation of India in the great Asiatic Federation, which I see in the course of formation. I have hardly any doubt that the Pan-Islamic movement, which was started on a somewhat narrow basis, has given way or is about to give way to the great Federation of all Asiatic peoples. It is the union of the oppressed nationalities of Asia. Is India to remain outside this union? I admit that our freedom must be won by ourselves but such a bond of friendship and love, of sympathy and co-

operation, between India and the rest of Asia, nay, between India and the liberty-loving people of the world, is destined to bring about world peace. World peace to my mind means the freedom of every nationality, and I go further and say that no nation on the face of the earth can be really free when other nations are in bondage. The policy which we have hitherto pursued was absolutely necessary for the concentration of the work which we took upon ourselves to perform, and I agreed to that policy whole-heartedly. The hope of the attainment of Swaraj or a substantial basis of Swaraj in the course of the year made such concentration absolutely necessary. Today that very work demands broader sympathy and a wider outlook."

From amongst the Asiatic races, Japan was the first to respond to the call that C. R. Das made in the course of his address. A correspondent of a Bombay newspaper cabled the following message from Tokyo : "Despite *Reuter's* meagre reports of the Indian National Congress proceedings, considerably unusual interest has been roused in the Indian political situation, Mahatma Gandhi receiving glowing tributes from all quarters. Mr. Chitaranjan Das's thrilling address advocating the Pan-Asiatic movement replacing Pan-Islamism is sympathetically reviewed as inaugurating the dawn of a new era and helping to solve India's domestic problems.

" Five prominent politicians interviewed unanimously send Japan's hearty greetings to the Congress and wish success to the struggle for freedom. One ex-Minister acclaims Mahatma Gandhi as the world's noblest citizen, who has admirably served humanity's cause, promoted permanent world peace, awakened India from stupor, welded together peoples' religions and helped to demonstrate India's unity and common purpose. He opines that the Indians ridiculing Mahatma Gandhi are simply victims of slave mentality.

"The Tokyo Asahi's Peking correspondent telegraphs that Yantsenghsin, the Military Governor, is widely disseminating propaganda for the establishment of a Pan-Islamic Federation centring around Afghanistan, Persia, Bukhara, Turkestan, Arabia, and the Caucasus including millions of China's Muslims."

The need of foreign propaganda was further emphasised at Cocanada, where the plenary sessions of the Congress met. Maulana Mohammad Ali, as President of the Congress, started the practice of exchanging messages on auspicious occasions with Japan and since then the Indian National Congress has taken ample measures to make useful foreign contacts, so much so that on certain occasions the Congress propaganda was centred more round the foreign countries than in India herself.

The entry of the Swaraj Party in the

Councils brought fresh problems to India. It practically threw the Khilafat question to the background and almost all the leaders of India, who stood for fighting India's battle from within the framework of the Indian constitution, were now engaged in devising ways and means to solve the domestic question which presented itself, in all its intricacies, in the shape of the Hindu-Muslim problem. While a solution was still to be found, the feelings of the two communities were being more and more estranged in certain provinces over the question of Council seats and a fight for supremacy often ensued between the contending parties. Punjab was the main scene of bitter acrimony. The Khilafat Committee and Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Hind, two of the most powerful organisations of Indian Muslims at the time, had refused to have anything to do with the Councils. The need, therefore, was felt by Muslims that their Parliamentary activity should be organised and controlled by some central organisation which should have sufficient influence over the Muslim representatives in the Councils. In March 1924, the Council of the All-India Muslim League met in Delhi to consider the venue of the next session of the League, and it was decided that in the fourth week of May the League should assemble in Lahore under the presidentship of Mohammad Ali Jinnah. The news gave rise to bitter criticisms from all quarters and Jinnah was called upon to explain his attitude. Con-

sequently he issued a statement which appeared in the press on the 13th of May. The following is its reprint.

Mr. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, M. L. A., President-elect of the All-India Muslim League which shortly meets at Lahore, gave an interview to an Associated Press representative on the present situation in the country.

Asked as to the object of the proposed session of the League, Mr. Jinnah said: "The object of holding the session is to concentrate the united Muslim opinion with regard to (1) the question of the amendment of the constitution of India, (2) to bring about a friendly understanding in the Punjab in particular, where owing to certain causes, which seem insignificant, a great deal of misunderstanding has been created between Hindus and Musalmans, and (3) to bring about, in due course, through and by means of the All-India Muslim League organisation once more a complete settlement between the Hindus and the Muslims as was done at Lucknow in 1916.

"The League is not in any way going to adopt a policy or programme which will, in the least degree as far as I can judge, be antagonistic to the Indian National Congress, the Khilafat organisation or the Jamiat-ul-Ulema. On the contrary, I believe it will proceed on lines which are best calculated to further the

general national interests, not forgetting the particular interests of the Muslim Community."

Dealing with the specific questions agitating the Musalman Community, Mr. Jinnah pointed out that they were two, namely, the proportion of representation in the country's legislatures, in municipal and local bodies and the percentage of Muslims in the services of the country. "The settlement with regard to these questions," said Mr. Jinnah, "can only be brought about by a spirit of 'give and take.' For that purpose, it is necessary to infuse a friendly feeling and a sense of fairness on both sides. Unfortunately the recent rivalry displayed by the *Shuddhi* and the *Sangathan* movements, the prejudices roused on the cow-killing question and the playing of music near mosques,—these are the outstanding features of the trouble, and we desire, if possible, to make both parties cry halt in that direction and inculcate in both parties a spirit of 'live and let live.'"

To a question as to how he was going to achieve all these, Mr. Jinnah replied: "All this can be done when we have once more made the All-India Muslim League a living and well-organised political body as it was, with branches all over the country. It is then alone that leaders will be able to speak with authority and be in a position to bring about a complete

settlement which will be acceptable to the Musalman public. In order to bring about this desired result, we may have to appoint a committee of the All-India Muslim League with power to confer with a committee or committees appointed by other organisations such as the Congress or the Hindu Mahasabha."

Speaking of the Muslim position in relation to the Government of India Act, Mr. Jinnah said: "I may tell you that the Muslim opinion is no less persistent and strong that the Government of India Act must be overhauled, and that immediate steps should be taken to establish Dominion responsible Government for India. The Muslim representatives in the Assembly, which is the Central Legislature, realise no less than the Hindus that it is absolutely essential, in order to make the Assembly work and entitle it to claim the proud position of a representative body approaching a Parliament of people, that substantial responsibility must be introduced without delay under the Constitution, which can only be done by amending the Government of India Act, 1919, and not merely by discovering defects and rectifying the working of the reforms and only advancing within the rule-making power of the Act as it is proposed at present by the Government of India."

On the question of Hindu-Muslim unity Mr. Jinnah said: "Hindu-Muslim unity in

my opinion is a question entirely within the range of practical politics and will be brought about as it was done at Lucknow in 1916. I hope that our opponents who rely too much on the Hindu-Muslim difference, will soon be disappointed. Of course efforts will have to be made on both sides to remove the mischief which has crept in of late, particularly owing to a cause into which I need not at present enter or discuss."

Asked as to the Khilafat question in relation to the Muslim League, Mr. Jinnah said: "The question of the Khilafat, no doubt, has become very complicated. It is an institution which undoubtedly forms part and parcel of Islam. It is not a territorial question. It is not merely the concern of any single country, it is a question for the Muslims of the world to determine. I have no doubt that those who are learned and qualified in the laws and religion of Islam will, when they meet from all parts of the world, in an Islamic Congress which is already in contemplation, find a solution. It will be one of the questions which will, doubtless, engage the most anxious attention of the next session of the League at Lahore."

Concluding Mr. Jinnah said: "I would appeal to every member of the All-India Muslim League at this most critical juncture when the question of further reforms and

Hindu-Muslim settlement and other purely, but no less important, domestic questions concerning Muslims are going to be considered they should attend the sessions of the League in large numbers, notwithstanding the unsuitable season at Lahore and other inconveniences. I would also appeal to all prominent Muslims, whether members of the League or not, to attend and give us the benefit of their opinion on the questions which will come up before the League."

The session of the League commenced its sittings on the 25th of May at Lahore. The Presidential Address delivered by Jinnah before this session of the League is an important document and more or less a thesis on the contemporary political situation of India. It deals with a reasoned analysis of the events that took place since 1920 in regard to India's struggle for freedom and its subsequent results. Jinnah outlined his scheme for the achievement of Swaraj.

"But, while that demand is a just one and the sentiment only natural and requires all encouragement, we must not forget that one essential requisite condition to achieve Swaraj is the political unity between Hindus and Muslims, for the advent of foreign rule and its continuance in India is primarily due to the fact that the people of India particularly the Hindus and Muslims are not united, and

do not sufficiently trust each other. The domination by the bureaucracy will continue so long as the Hindus and Muslims do not come to a settlement. I am almost inclined to say that India will get Dominion Responsible Government the day the Hindus and Muslims are united. Swaraj is almost an interchangeable term with Hindu-Muslim unity."

He then emphasised the need for the education of the people and declared that primary education must be made compulsory. The leaders, he said, must concentrate upon national planning in the social, political, educational and economic spheres of life. Then alone India could dream of achieving her goal of Swaraj. He believed that Swaraj was the immediate issue on which all forces must be concentrated. The system of the Government of India was far from satisfactory and the Indian Legislature must be thoroughly overhauled. Diarchy had failed in its purpose in India and the main task before the League was to see that an atmosphere of fraternity is created in the country between the various elements in order that a joint scheme of constitution is once again formulated as it was done in 1916 at Lucknow.

To facilitate the work of the leaders in this direction the League appointed a committee in order " to frame a scheme of constitution of the Government of India in

consultation with the committee or committees that may be appointed by other political organisations in the country" and to place the same before a session of the League for approval.

Jinnah's appeal for unity reached the remotest corners of India. "For me the only question for immediate solution before the country is," wrote Gandhi, "the Hindu-Musalman question. I agree with Mr. Jinnah that Hindu-Muslim unity means Swaraj. I see no way of achieving anything in this afflicted country without a lasting heart-unity between Hindus and Musalmans of India. I believe in the immediate possibility of achieving it, because it is so natural, so necessary for both, and because I believe in human nature."

It is an irony of fate, however, that the President of the Indian National Congress, an eminent Musalman, was the first to doubt the *bona fides* of the League, and with a lengthy statement from him, almost immediately after the League sessions, a controversy of a serious nature developed between him and Mr. Jinnah. Maulana Mohammad Ali had called into question the representative character of the League and had accused it of being under the influence of a selected few. He believed that the amendment which was brought in by him to the main resolution on the question of franchise and representation

of Musalmans in the Councils, was made to be defeated because of the intrigues of a few interested members. Jinnah's reply to the Maulana in this regard was categorical and today has a considerable importance, so much so that it concluded with an appeal to the Hindus that they must accept the Muslim League's opinion and not the Maulana's views. " In conclusion," said he, " I would appeal to my Hindu friends not to be carried away by the antics of Mr. Mohammad Ali. I have very little doubt in my mind that population basis will not be accepted by the Musalmans. I am not, as it is well known, one of those who are enamoured of separate electorates and separate representation. But the Muslim opinion is so strong on this question that we might take it as a settled fact for the time being. On that basis the Muslims should have an adequate and effective representation, wherever they are in a minority. The percentage, the ratio on the population, can only be fixed by mutual goodwill and consent, in order to secure the success of any scheme that may come in force for representation to the Municipalities and legislatures. I, therefore, hope that the Hindus will not misunderstand me, as I still stand a tried nationalist and if the Muslims ought to be organised it is not with a view to prejudicing national advance, or national interest, but, on the contrary, to bring them into line with the rest of India."

Maulana Mohammad Ali wrote back two exceedingly lengthy letters to the press in which he not only employed very minor affairs of the League in support of his argument, but also made personal attacks on the League leader. The controversy ended with Jinnah's usual silence.

The present writer may here, for the time being, digress from the main thread of the narrative, for the sake of the pleasant duty of informing the reader of a remarkable trait of Jinnah's character, which the writer has the good fortune of observing from close quarters. During the short period of the writer's personal association with this great Muslim leader there arose a number of controversies both of a political and social nature, and as far as the writer remembers all of them ended with Jinnah's silence. In fact in all those in which Jinnah himself took any part he barely went further than to issue a single statement. The fact was not infrequently misconstrued by his political opponents to mean his moral defeat and that he had no facts to disprove allegations against him. But all those who have been in close touch with him know that in so doing he is guided by only one consideration, namely, that the encouragement to controversies gives rise to unnecessary washing of dirty linen in public and that such practices are by no means bene-

ficial to the public good—a consideration which he never loses sight of. He strongly believes that his selfless sincerity to the cause for which he stands would ultimately vindicate his *bona fides*. He relies on nothing other than the righteousness of his action and is confident that truth must after all prevail.

Mohammad Ali Jinnah, however, earnestly engaged himself, once again, in the service of India, both inside and outside the legislature with a view to influencing the British Government to introduce a system of government in this country which would suit the genius of India and also to bring about that happy union of minds and hearts between the various elements of public life which was in his opinion absolutely necessary for the fulfilment of the final hope of attaining Swaraj. With the opening of the second Legislative Assembly, on the 31st of January, 1924, he, in recognition of his genius as a parliamentarian, was appointed on the panel of Chairmen to the Assembly with three others.

A member of the Nationalist Party then, he picked up the broken threads of his policy, which he had left ever since his resignation from the Assembly in circumstances already described. A study of the proceedings of the House shows that of all the leaders, at the time, Jinnah was most active to bring home to the Government of India, the fact that affairs of the Army were not being managed properly.

"The staggering increase in the military expenditure of the country which had reached in 1921-22 the sum of nearly seventy crores of rupees, gave the Indians a peep into the minds of their alien rulers, and into the dangers of a superimposed foreign Government. When India was denuded of the greater portion of her troops for the various theatres of the war, no attempt was made by our rulers to create a large number of battalions and regiments out of the people of this country for the purpose of keeping internal and domestic peace and garrisoning the frontiers. This unwillingness to depend on the valour of Indians for the defence of India was due principally to a policy of mistrust and apprehension, and received further corroboration when Commander-in-Chief after Commander-in-Chief resisted with all the proposals for the creation of new territorial or auxiliary forces for a second line of defence or for the establishment of an Indian Sandhurst."*

But Mohammad Ali Jinnah, for one, did not lose hope and during the Budget Session of the Assembly in the year 1924, took up the cause and raised a vigorous protest, pointed out the faults and suggested ways and means for the solution of the problem. He threw in all his weight to impress upon the Government of India that for the welfare of the country her people demanded a complete

*P. C. Ray: *Life and Times of C. R. Das*

Indianisation of the Army. Besides this, his valuable contribution to the cause of the Civil Services, his criticism of and useful suggestions to the recommendations of the Lee Commission, appointed by His Majesty's Government the previous year, and his strong plea for the competitive examinations to be held simultaneously in India, are well known and need no comment.

To the burning questions of the day such as the grant of full self-governing Dominion Status to India and the return of B. G. Horniman, the editor of the *Bombay Chronicle*, who was deported in 1919, Jinnah gave his full support and was instrumental, to a very large extent, in prevailing upon the British Government to take due notice of the sentiment and opinion of the Indian peoples. In the sphere of legislation also he took a marked interest in questions relating to the Indian Penal Law and Indian Criminal Law.

On the question of the failure of the constitution of India, the Government also showed signs of agreement, but were desirous that instead of overhauling the entire system it would be better, for the time being, to remove whatever flaws were discovered in it. With this view a Committee was appointed with Sir Alexander Muddiman, the Home Member, as its President, who in his speech on the floor of the Assembly had declared

that if this Committee would find that the Act of 1919 was beyond redemption and that a new constitution was inevitable, the Government of India would be willing to recommend to His Majesty's Government on these lines. Mohammad Ali Jinnah had seen a ray of hope in this pronouncement and accepted to serve on the Committee, which consisted of, besides the President, three Europeans, Sir Mohammad Shafi who happened to be the Law Member at the time and five non-official Indians.

The investigations began by the middle of the year 1924 and evidence was collected from all over the country and leaders of all shades of opinion were given a hearing. Even when the evidence was being recorded the official group tried to carry it in their favour, but Jinnah's frequent intervention saved the situation and very often there was a rift between the official and non-official sections of the Committee. The result was that four Indian members, Sir Sivaswamy Iyer, Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, Dr. Paranjpye and Mohammad Ali Jinnah submitted a separate minority report in which they held that no improvement of the situation was possible without a structural alteration of the constitution itself. But they were precluded from considering this position by the terms of reference of this Committee. In some matters, they agreed with the majority, and they all recommended that the control of the Secretary of State on

matters affecting purely Indian interests should be relaxed; that joint deliberation between the two halves of the Provincial Governments should be definitely enjoined and enforced by a change in the devolution rules; that the Ministers' salaries should be fixed by statute at a minimum of three-fifths of the salary of an Executive Councillor; that the Finance Minister of any Provincial Government should not be placed in charge of any main spending department, and that Members and Ministers should be given enhanced powers of reappropriation. Among other recommendations of the minority were included such proposals as the abolition of the official block in the Councils, the formulation of a definite scheme of Indianisation of the Army, and the limitation of the certification powers of the Governor-General.

All this could have been done years earlier. "If the object of the Nationalists," writes P. C. Ray, "was to attain complete self-government in a short time, they could not have committed a greater blunder than boycotting the Councils in the elections of 1920. In their anxiety to offer an effective obstruction to the Government and to clog the wheels of the existing administration, the non-co-operating Nationalists proved rather short-sighted. They mortgaged the future of India to achieve a temporary and histrionic effect. If they had taken advantage of their presence

in the Councils, in 1921, as they did afterwards in the elections of 1923, the leaders of the new movement would have forced the pace of responsible government to their hearts' desire from the very beginning of the reconstituted Councils. But their absence from the first Council under the new constitution did incalculable harm in the cause of Indian progress, and did not allow the people to get a glimpse of the defects of diarchy in good time."

CHAPTER XIV

BIRTH OF PAKISTAN

The issue of Council entry had been practically settled by the middle of the year 1924. The Swarajists had already been busy "wrecking the constitution" from within the Councils by adopting all possible ways of obstruction in the administration of the country. Others were fully co-operating with the Government in all their measures. A compromise between Changers and No-changers had been arrived at by the intervention of Gandhi and a programme for spinning and wearing of country-made cloth was put before the people of India. But the question of Hindu-Muslim unity had yet to be handled, and Hindu and Muslim leaders were earnestly making an effort to achieve this coveted settlement. In this connection Mohammad Ali Jinnah's name stood foremost among Muslims.

The communal question was before the country for a long time and our leaders had made desperate endeavours to find a solution. The Gaya Congress had appointed a Committee including Dr. Ansari and Lala Lajpat Rai to draw up a National Pact, and they had submitted their report before the Cocanada Congress in 1923, but it was referred to an-

other Committee and was never heard of any more. On the other hand, C. R. Das had formulated an agreement between Hindus and Muslims covering religious as well as political questions, which also came up for consideration before the same Congress but it was summarily rejected on the ground that it conceded too much to the Muslims.

Jinnah explained the circumstances thus. A question might be asked, he said, as to why this was done; his reply was that the Congress or Hindu-Muslim leaders, were not able to "deliver the goods," and therefore this was the usual method of shelving the question when it could not be settled. One thing was clear that both the Hindu and the Muslim leaders felt that it was not possible to come to some agreement and they felt a sort of despair and resignation. The press which was conducted by educated and intelligent people kept the question of the Muslim representation in the Local Boards and the Municipalities and a fair share in the services of Government, alive in the meantime, which created a great deal of bitterness and mutual distrust. Unless, therefore, this question of political adjustment between these two communities was settled the feelings of bitterness and distrust would not be removed and he was afraid there would not be any political unity. This question of dispute was no more confined to the educated classes since it had

filtered down to the masses, and many other difficult questions as those of "Shudhi," cow sacrifice and *tanzim* had cropped up, followed by bloodshed and riots which occurred in many districts recently.

But how was unity to be achieved? He felt very strongly that the Hindu-Muslim agreement was a condition precedent to India's attainment of *Swaraj*, nay, even of the attainment of any substantial portion of *Swaraj*. At the same time they could not afford to shelve this question any more. It was up to the educated men of both these communities to settle and compose the differences. This could be done, he said, by organisation. The Hindus were, he thought, very ably organised. The Muslims were not. The Hindus were organised because the Indian National Congress was mainly composed of Hindus. The Swaraj Party too was mainly composed of the Hindus. The Liberal Party and Hindu Sabha also were composed of Hindus. The Muslims were not so well organised. There was of course the Khilafat Committee but he thought that the activities of the Khilafat organisation drifted to matters outside India, and did not concern themselves with the domestic solidarity of Indian Musalmans.

Jinnah, therefore, urged the establishment of a proper Muslim organisation com-

posed of Muslim leaders who could sit at a Round Table Conference with their Hindu brethren and settle the thorny problems, once for all. He only suggested this method of compromise in view of the current conditions of India, and he was sure the better sense of judgment of the leaders of both these communities would appeal to them that it was their paramount duty to settle and compose the differences between Hindus and Muslims as the interests of India required an immediate and permanent settlement. He assured his Hindu friends that so far as he was concerned his only ambition, motive and object was to bring about happy relations between these two great communities of India.

Under the guidance of Mohammad Ali Jinnah, in May, the Muslim League had taken the initiative of reviving the days of Lucknow Pact of 1916. Side by side the annual Bengal Conference was held and the passionate eloquence of C. R. Das once more carried the day and in spite of vigorous opposition from many Hindus the Bengal Pact was adopted by a large majority.

In September, at the instance of Gandhi, a Unity Conference was called at Delhi under the shadow of his fast, by Maulana Mohammad Ali, the then President of the Congress. It was well attended and an honest effort was made by everybody present for a

fruitful approach to the problem. Even the Anglican Metropolitan and many representatives of Britishers in India participated in it. A formula was devised for promoting unity between the different communities in India and a Conciliation Board of fifteen members was set up which was to intervene whenever and wherever any communal trouble arose. Many resolutions were passed mainly on the questions of Cow Sacrifice, Music before Mosques, *Shudhi* and *Tanzeem* and several other things of a minor nature. But such things, as has been rightly pointed out by Jawaharlal Nehru, are not decided by majority vote. They are inherent in the character of Indian masses and require a great deal of education before they could be eradicated as main points of conflict.

One great event in the Muslim international question gave an impetus to the efforts of the leader in this direction. In March Mustafa Kamal Pasha had taken the step of abolishing the Khilafat altogether, and it had the effect of creating a most extraordinary situation in India. Muslim leaders divided among themselves on the Khilafat question. Some sided with Mustafa Kamal and others believed that abolition of Khilafat was the negation of Islam itself. However, many Khilafat Committees liquidated themselves and their leaders devoted themselves to the domestic questions only.

In November an All-Parties Conference was called at Bombay. But this time the object of the Conference was to consolidate opinion in India amongst all parties against the growing virulence of the repressive measures of the Government in Bengal. The Conference condemned many actions of the Government and appointed a Committee to prepare a scheme for *Swaraj*, including communal settlement—to report not later than 31st March 1925. To the deliberations and final conclusions of this Conference Mohammad Ali Jinnah, as usual, made a historic contribution.

In the meantime, extreme views grew deeper and deeper both amongst Hindus and Muslims. Provocative pronouncements from both sides irritated each other and both the communities were drifting towards militant nationalism. Maulana Mohammad Ali and others had given indication of their extra-territorial interest in Muslim countries ; while Hindu leaders like Swami Shardhanand were busy with their activities of *Shudhi* and *Sanghatan*. Gandhi defended everybody, although he admitted that the Swami's speeches were "often irritating." But Gandhi himself wrote rather unguardedly. His remark that an average Muslim was a *bully* and an average Hindu a *coward* was ill-timed and unwarranted. His wholesale condemnation of "Muslim *goondas*" without any mention

of Hindu atrocities during the time of riots created suspicions in the Muslim mind. It is unthinkable that he wrote without scrutinising his sources of information, but it is equally unthinkable that Hindus were absolutely innocent. At any rate Gandhi's broadcast of petty things and minor affairs only aggravated bitter feelings among the two communities; and the general masses felt very much irritated. At a time when the blackest page was being written in India's political history, Gandhi's spiritual philosophy deriving inspiration from unimportant incidents had an adverse effect and brought good to no one. In fact he invariably involved himself into terrific rigmaroles, of which, but for his extraordinary ability, he could not wriggle out. He subjected himself to the alternate reproaches from Hindus and Muslims whenever he tried to be impartial. It was, therefore, in the fitness of things that much of what Gandhi had written during this period should never have seen the light of the day, as it provided food for increased discussion and acrimony rather than facts for the solution of the difficulty.

In spite of this, however, even the Extremists believed that this was a passing phase and that Hindu-Muslim unity was not altogether impossible. Maulana Hasrat Mohani was the only one who refused to take part in the communal controversies, but was seriously engaged in drawing up a scheme for settle-

ment. He had thought of a system of government, which envisaged the establishment of separate Muslim and Hindu States. Lala Lajpat Rai, who had hitherto practically led the Hindu opposition against Muslims, was also thinking in the same terms simultaneously, and, according to him, had improved upon Maulana's scheme. The Lala was the only one who had practically given up all hopes of a settlement, so long as the Muslims insisted on separate electorates or separate representation, which, at the time, formed the central pivot of the Muslim policy. Gandhi frankly acknowledged the fact. "Another one distrusted," wrote he, "is Lala Lajpat Rai. I have found him to be frank as a child. His record of sacrifice is almost unequalled. I have had not one but many a chat on the Hindu-Muslim question with him. He is no enemy of the Musalmans. But I confess that he has his doubts about the immediate attainment of unity. He is seeking light from on High. He believes in that unity in spite of himself because, as he told me, he believes in *Swaraj*. He recognises that without that unity there can be no *Swaraj*. He only does not know how and when it can be attained."

The Lala himself wrote a series of articles at the time and gave a fairly good account of the history of the communal trouble. In conclusion he emphatically declared, "Let those who demand communal representation

with separate electorates in all the representative institutions of the land, honestly confess that they do not believe in nationalism or in a united India. The two things are absolutely irreconcilable. Mr. M. A. Jinnah is the latest recruit to this party, and I really cannot understand how he calls himself a Nationalist still. The euphemism that this is only tentative and that a time will come when the Muslims will be ready to give up communal representation, should deceive no one. Once you accept communal representation with separate electorates, there is no chance of its being ever abolished, without a civil war. A civil war will, again, actually mean supremacy of one community over the other. This lends weight to the fear entertained by some Hindus that some, at least, of the Muslim leaders are counting on the help of foreign Muslim States to establish Muslim rule throughout Hindustan. Whether this fear is or is not well-founded, it is only natural that those who entertain it should oppose communal representation with all the strength they can command. Their opposition, however, cannot be effective as the Government seems determined to adopt this course. Therein they see the best guarantee of the permanence of the present conditions. Communal representation with separate electorates is the most effective reply to the demand for *Swaraj*, and the surest way of India never getting it. I have never been able to appreciate

the mentality of those who constantly talk of turning out the British and at the same time insist on communal representation with separate electorates. I really do not understand what they mean. The second is the surest way of the first being never realised...

"My suggestion is that the Punjab should be partitioned into two provinces, the Western Punjab with a large Muslim majority to be Muslim-governed province; and the Eastern Punjab with a large Hindu-Sikh majority to be non-Muslim-governed province. I do not discuss Bengal. To me it is unimaginable that the rich and highly progressive and alive Hindus of Bengal will ever work out the Pact agreed to by Mr. Das. I will make the same suggestion in their case, but if Bengal is prepared to accept Mr. Das's Pact, I have nothing to say. It is its own look-out.

"Maulana Hasrat Mohani has recently said that the Muslims will never agree to India's having Dominion Status under the British. What they aim at are separate Muslim States in India united with Hindu States under a National Federal Government. He is also in favour of smaller States containing compact Hindu and Muslim populations. If communal representation with separate electorates is to be the rule, then Maulana Hasrat's scheme as to smaller provinces seems to be the only workable proposition. Under

my scheme the Muslims will have four Muslim States: (1)—the Pathan Province or the North-West Frontier; (2)—Western Punjab; (3)—Sind; and (4)—Eastern Bengal. If there are compact Muslim communities in any other part of India, sufficiently large to form a province, they should be similarly constituted. But it should be distinctly understood that this is not a united India. It means a clear partition of India into a Muslim India and a non-Muslim India."

Lala Lajpat Rai's writings are important today inasmuch as they were to form the central pivot of the Congress policy in the coming years. In the first instance, they warned the Hindus that, if Musalmans were allowed a free hand in India, things might not go according to the wishes of the Hindus. The opposition to communal electorates and separate representation, under the fear of Muslim internationalism, if analysed, reduces itself to nothing more than the insistence on a system of election under which the Musalmans could never think or act independently. A subtle suggestion was made, therefore, by means of which both the Musalmans and the British Government could be put in an awkward position. If the Musalman insisted upon his demand as a separate entity he could be held responsible for the delay in the attainment of *Swaraj*; and if the British Government backed up the Muslim demand, their

action could be misconstrued as one in their own interest rather than in the interest of India. In this way also the Musalmans could be induced to surrender their interests. A study of contemporary politics will undoubtedly convince every student of the fact that the Indian National Congress had, times out of number, employed both these arguments in trying to prove that separate electorates were not in the interest of India. It is not suggested by the author that Lala Lajpat Rai also was actuated by these motives or that he purposely employed these arguments to initiate thinking on these lines, but that a section of Hindu politicians was set afloat to consider the problem from this angle is undoubtedly clear from the events that followed.

Lala's approach to the communal question was more from a practical point of view than merely theoretical. He had two alternatives as a solution—either the Muslims should give up their role as a separate entity or India should be divided into Hindu States and Muslim States, failing which India could never hope to become independent. The difference between him and Maulana Hasrat Mohani on this question was that while the Maulana contemplated a single Federation of the Hindu and Muslim States, the Lala made no commitment in this regard; and thus he alone heralded the idea of a clear Partition of India. Lala Lajpat Rai is thus the pioneer of two

movements in our political life. The one among Hindus which culminated finally in the present political stand of the Hindu Mahasabha, the other among Muslims that received an impetus by the famous Lahore Resolution of the All-India Muslim League of 1940. The only difference is that while the former was deliberate the latter was its natural consequence ; while the one was the direct result of Lala's endeavours, the other was an inevitable shadow of his view-point.

That Lala Lajpat Rai's writings had an immediate effect on the minds of these two peoples of India is manifest from the subsequent events in our history. He had warned the Hindus that they had no friends outside the country and they must organise themselves and form themselves into a strong body to be able to resist all moves which would be against their vital interests. He believed that their interests could only be looked after by Hindu Mahasabha and, therefore, urged its reorganisation. "I am very strongly opposed to denominational political organisations," said he. "In my judgment they are harmful to the political evolution of the country on national lines. But if the Hindu-Muslim problem is to be solved on denominational lines, I can see no justification for the view that while the Muslims should be represented by the Muslim League and the Khilafat Committee, the Hindu point of view should be left to be

expressed by the Congress. For the last five years—even if not before that—the Congress has been a joint organisation of Hindus and Muslims; in fact it has done more for the Muslims than for the Hindus. Under the circumstances, I do not think it is fair to the Hindus, that in a settlement of the Hindu-Muslim problem, the Congress should have the deciding voice. The Muslim denominational attitude must inevitably be followed by a similar attitude on the part of the Hindus. Circumstances have forced me to conclude that if Hindus and Muslims are to be considered as two parties to a quarrel, the only organisation that can represent the Hindus is the Hindu Mahasabha. It should be remembered that the Mahasabha is an old institution, though it never before grew into vitality.

"The present attitude of the Muslim leaders on national questions has made it absolutely necessary for the Hindus to strengthen their political denominational organisation to give voice to their communal position. The result may be unfortunate, but it cannot be helped."

About this time also, Lala Lajpat Rai wrote the letter to C. R. Das, which, after Jinnah had quoted it in his presidential address before the All-India Muslim League in 1940, became famous and attracted wide attention among the Muslims. "There is one point

more," wrote the Lala, "which has been troubling me very much of late and one which I want you to think carefully and that is the question of Hindu-Mohammedan unity. I have devoted most of my time during the last six months to the study of Muslim history and Muslim law and I am inclined to think it is neither possible nor practicable. Assuming and admitting the sincerity of Mohammedan leaders in the non-co-operation movement, I think their religion provides an effective bar to anything of the kind. You remember the conversation I reported to you in Calcutta which I had with Hakim Ajmal Khan and Dr. Kitchlu. There is no finer Mohammedan in Hindustan than Hakim Ajmal Khan, but can any Muslim leader override the Koran? I can only hope that my reading of the Islamic law is incorrect. And nothing would relieve me more than to be convinced that it is so. But if it is right, then I come to this, that although we can unite against the British, we cannot do so to rule Hindustan on British lines. *We cannot do so to rule Hindustan on democratic lines.* What is then the remedy? I am not afraid of the seven crores of Musalmans. But I think the seven crores in Hindustan plus the armed hosts of Afghanistan, Central Asia, Arabia, Mesopotamia and Turkey will be irresistible. I do honestly and sincerely believe in the necessity or desirability of Hindu-Muslim unity. I am also fully prepared to trust the Muslim leaders. But what about

the injunctions of the Koran and Hadis? The leaders cannot override them. Are we then doomed? I hope your learned mind and wise head will find some way out of this difficulty."

A strong movement was thus set afoot among the Hindus and under the very canopy which held the plenary sessions of the Congress at Belgaum, the Hindu Mahasabha was revived and revitalised. Belgaum also laid the foundations of extra-territorial contacts for Hindus; and although the Congress officially refused to adopt a resolution urging the need of foreign propaganda, some of the Hindu leaders made it a point to establish connections in Japan, China, Burma and other countries of the Orient. Among the Muslims also, a strong opinion was being slowly and gradually centring round the question of Partition. Chaudhry Rahmat Ali, a student in London, had started working on these lines, and one fine sunny morning, while taking a ride in one of the omnibuses of London, he conceived of a suitable nomenclature for the Northern Independent Muslim State. Of course, he had gone a step further than Lala Lajpat Rai had done. He had included the State of Kashmir also in his scheme as Kashmir's population is overwhelmingly Muslim. Thus taking "P" from the Punjab, "A" from Afghan (North-West Frontier Province), "K" from Kashmir, "S" from Sind and

"Tan" from Baluchistan, he had coined, according to Urdu usage, a word "Pakistan" —a word which had been the cause of much insinuation, intimidation and vilification of Muslims since then.

Soon after the Belgaum sessions of the Congress, the All-India Muslim League held its annual sessions at Bombay, and in spite of great opposition from Muslims, Mohammad Ali Jinnah had managed to invite the Hindu leaders and a number of them spoke from the League platform. The main resolution was concerned with the communal unity, and it was moved by Mohammad Ali Jinnah urging that a Committee be appointed to "formulate the Muslim demand regarding the representation of the Muslim community in the Legislatures of the country and in other elective bodies and their due and proper share in the public services, with power to them to confer with the other political organisations and report to the Muslim League." Jinnah pointed out that there was an acute controversy with regard to the Muslim representation in the legislatures, municipal councils and local boards for a long time past. There were, he said, historical dissensions and social antagonism between the Hindu and Muslim communities. The most idealistic view was that there should be no separate communal representation but that only "the best and fittest men" should be in the service of the country. There

were many Hindus and Muslims who fervently desired and held that view. But he did not think that a few hundred Hindu or Muslim nationalists would solve that problem. In India there were 70 million Muslims and 250 million Hindus. As one swallow did not make a summer so a few nationalists did not make a political summer. They had to formulate a scheme and grapple with the question firmly to bring about unity. When they achieved that unity then only could they say with pride that they were citizens of India which no power on earth could assail. The talk of unity was going on for the last three or four years but the state of affairs was going from bad to worse. They had, therefore, to set about in the right direction and thoroughly organise both the Hindus and Muslims. He had not come across any Muslims who were not as anxious to work for the welfare and prosperity of India as were Hindu brethren. At the same time, he did not think that there were Hindus who could deny justice and fairplay to their Muslim brethren. All that was required was to sit together and bring about settlement which was honourable to both. The Committee proposed would be like an executive of one nation dealing with the executive of another nation and find out a basis for settlement. He warned his hearers against the mischief-makers who had some selfish interests to serve. They, sometimes,

said that Muslim interests were outside India, that they had the kingdoms of Turkey, Persia and Afghanistan and they were looking to Islam as a big world power. He did not think people were so foolish as to take this statement seriously. They were also told that Hindus were in majority and they would outvote the Muslims in the ballot box. Jinnah did not think that it was possible to rule 70 millions of Muslims by the ballot box. He urged the Muslims of India to take a fair and practical view and he trusted the proposed Committee would be able to do some useful work.

The two leaders, the symbols of unity—Jinnah and Gandhi—were crying themselves hoarse to bring their respective people to their senses, but it was a cry in the wilderness. During the Muslim League sessions at Bombay Maulana Shaukat Ali had moved a resolution stressing the great need for unity among Muslims and later Seth Yaqub Hasan of Madras had drawn the attention of Muslims to the inciting speeches of Lala Lajpat Rai and other Hindu leaders and hoped that Muslims would awaken themselves to the situation and realise that their salvation lay in their own inherent strength, and appealed for funds for the amelioration of the Malabar Muslims. On the other hand, Hindu politics were taking a serious turn and day by day tending to become antagonistic to Muslim interests. Strong

orthodoxy was let loose and India was clearly divided into Hindu and Muslim camps. So strong was the Hindu orthodox feeling that even Gandhi was losing much ground and his influence was waning day by day. Muslims distrusted him as he was a Hindu. Hindus disowned him as he was in their opinion inclined to be too liberal. Early in 1925, the bulk of the high-caste Hindus revolted against him on the question of untouchability, for the abolition of which he had appealed. Meetings were held and Gandhi was publicly denounced and condemned. It was a bold experiment of Gandhi's life, but the results were unexpectedly bitter. He had two alternatives before him—either he should succumb to the popular opinion and while retaining his position and influence pursue his policy of reform or stand aloof in opposition to all and harp on his string without harmony. What course Gandhi adopted the subsequent events have shown all too clearly.

In the field of communal unity, it was decided to call once again an All-Parties Conference. Mohammad Ali Jinnah was directly instrumental in pushing the idea forward. He made a passionate appeal to all concerned to make a thorough study of the main question of Muslim representation in the Councils. He put forward the solution of the problem in its five aspects—separate electorates with special representation; representation strictly

according to population ; joint electorates with reservation of seats ; proportionate representation with single transferable vote and common electorates with no communal considerations. The Conference was held at Delhi on the 23rd of January 1925, under the presidentship of Gandhi. Prominent spokesmen of all shades of opinion participated. Jinnah represented the Muslim point of view, Ramaswamy Mudaliar that of the non-Brahmins of Madras, and Malaviya, Lajpat Rai and Swamy Shardhanand spoke on behalf of the Hindus. The Conference, after long discussions, ended with the appointment of Committee to tackle the question in detail, which began its work at once. Giving an account of the proceedings of the Committee, Gandhi wrote on the 5th February 1925 :

" The All Parties' Committee met to consider the question referred to it by the Conference. It appointed a sub-committee of nearly fifty to consider the question. The sub-committee appointed a smaller committee to consider all possible Swaraj schemes and report to the sub-committee the results of its deliberations. Dr. Besant is labouring at this smaller committee with her usual application and energy which put to shame younger men and women. But, naturally, the attention centred round the Hindu-Muslim problem; not that it is intrinsically more important except for individuals like me, but because it blocks all

progress towards Swaraj. The sub-committee proved too formal for the task. It was necessary to avoid the reserve and the stiffness even of a committee and to be absolutely informal and to have a still smaller number of persons. This was done and a few of each community met at Hakim Sahib's house. The result has been succinctly given to the press by Pandit Motilal Nehru. I agree that there is no cause for anxiety or disappointment. For all want a solution. Some want it at once, some regard the time not to be seasonable, some would sacrifice everything to get a solution, others would be cautious and would wait till they have secured what to them is an indispensable minimum. But all agreed that a solution of the problem was essential to Sawaraj. And since all want Swaraj, a solution must not be beyond the reach of those who are engaged in finding it. The prospect was never so bright as when we parted to meet again on 28th February. Meanwhile, every one is to explore fresh avenues to a settlement.

"The public will want to know my view on communal representation. I am opposed to it with all my heart, but I would agree to anything so long as it ensures peace and is honourable to both the parties. In the absence of agreement on the plans suggested by either party, I have presented a solution which might answer the purpose. But I need

not discuss it at the present stage. I hope that the responsible members of both the communities will leave no stone unturned whether by means of private, quiet talks or by means of a public expression of their opinions. I hope, too, that newspaper men will write nothing to irritate any party, but will observe discreet silence where they cannot usefully assist."

The sub-committee's deliberations, however, did not bear any fruit and on the 5th of March Gandhi and Motilal Nehru, by a joint statement, postponed its meeting *sine die*, on the ground that the attendance of its members became so thin that it was no use carrying on its work and that so far it totally failed to arrive at a solution. The failure of the Committee came as a rude shock to every one. Our best brains served on it, and all, as Gandhi rightly said, were anxious to arrive at a settlement. Not only that the country as a whole was awaiting the good news eagerly, but also the orthodox communal opinion was sincerely wishing for it. Yet our leaders failed. What was the reason for this failure, no one knows. The fact is that they failed. Was the British bureaucracy responsible for this failure? Or was it our own fault? Was it the legacy we inherited from that historical unity of non-co-operation days of which our nationalists are proud? These are the questions

which a student of our contemporary politics must leave unanswered.

In the meantime, there occurred another event worthy of note. For some time past the activities of the Swarajists were drifting towards extremism and they were inclined to obstruct the working of the Government from all sides and to oppose all official measures, reasonable or unreasonable. This in the opinion of Jinnah and some of his supporters was not only unfair but harmful to the larger interests of India. Besides, it was not in keeping with the election manifesto and the pledge on which he was returned to the Assembly as an independent candidate. Consequently some of the members of the Assembly severed their connection with the Nationalist Party and formed themselves into an Independent Party with Mohammad Ali Jinnah as their leader, with the object of viewing all legislative measures on their merits and then to decide whether to support the Nationalists or the Government. During the early sessions of 1925, the Independents had voted with the Government benches against the "Nationalists" on the question of Budget grants. This gave rise to bitter criticisms from all quarters and at once Jinnah was classed among the orthodox communal leaders. The Rt. Hon. Sastri at Kumbakonam referring to communal dissensions had said that Jinnah whom every one regarded as a 'thoroughgoing

Nationalist' and as an ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity was now advocating special claims of Muslims, implying thereby that Jinnah's nationalism was questionable, and that he had admitted having changed his point of view. A newspaper man drew his attention to this and on the 11th of April he issued a statement in which he said, "I regret to notice that the Rt. Hon. Sastri attributes to me that I am an advocate of special Muslim claims and that I admitted having changed. Perhaps he is misled by the fact that at the All-Parties Conference at Delhi, I spoke as the representative of the Musalmans. If he will carefully read that speech of mine, it will make clear that I was speaking in my corporate capacity as to what Muslims in a body desire. I have not changed my views and still maintain the same position which was taken up by me in the memorandum of nineteen, and I still adhere to the principles of the Lucknow Pact and even to the resolution passed by the Assembly in January 1924 which says that the interests of the minorities should be protected and safeguarded. The difficulty arises in translating this formula into definite scheme. As I understand, it is not seriously disputed that at present the principle of communal representation should be accepted and I believe that a large body of Hindus will not oppose separate electorates if Muslims desire them. The only difficulty is with regard to the percentage of representation. But when you get

a pronouncement like the one which Lala Lajpat Rai made at Patna on the 7th instant which says he could not understand the attitude of Hindu leaders who wish to have *Swaraj* at any cost. What would they gain by *Swaraj* if they lost their own identity as Hindus? If they were annihilated as a community, *Swaraj* would not mean anything to them. And yet, Jinnah proceeded, "when Lala Lajpat Rai speaks on a national platform he wants people to think in terms of nationalism and communalism. It is a pronouncement of this character which makes the work of those who try to bring about a settlement between the two communities more difficult. If we cannot establish a democratic government in the near future, we can certainly establish a representative government and yet be masters of our affairs for all practical purposes. Under the present conditions of India a Representative Government is a first step before we get to the ideal which we all cherish at heart of establishing a democratic government."

The position of Gandhi was no less difficult. Apparently no shade of opinion was satisfied with him although he had made an attempt to divert the attention of his followers by suggesting an extraordinary programme of spinning and wearing of hand-spun cloth. Maharashtra had openly revolted against him and the Maharashtra Conference had

demanded his early retirement from active politics. Gandhi had, therefore, to reckon with a number of parties—Swarajists, Non-co-operators, Europeans, Hindus and Muslims. Obviously, as the President of the Indian National Congress, he could not displease anyone and had to adopt an attitude which would seem to satisfy everyone. Early in May while at Calcutta he gave a funny interview to a representative of the *Statesman*, which not only stands in strong contrast to his past policy but also is self-contradictory. He said, there were two sides to the Congress programme—the internal and the external. The object of the former was to achieve unity among all races—Hindu-Muslim unity, being a short term to cover all classes—the removal of untouchability by the Hindus, the spinning wheel and *Khaddar*. On the external side there was the activity in the Council represented by the Swaraj Party, which was an integral part of the National Congress. That was the whole of the national programme. "Europeans may well co-operate on the internal as well as on the external side," said he, "and I invite them, as I have always invited them, to examine the programme in both its aspects. As regards the external side, if they are satisfied, that we mean what we say, that we have absolutely no desire, even if we could, to drive out the English or to end the British connection, they should make common cause with us." But in the same breath he said,

"The programme of non-co-operation, so far as the nation is concerned, is suspended, but so far as I am personally concerned, it is not suspended, although the individual suspension has little meaning in it today." About the Hindu-Muslim unity, Gandhi said that at the moment it seemed to him an impossibility, but after some time it would be forthcoming. He added that there might be a clash between the two communities before unity was finally achieved, but he had no doubt that it was inevitable as each party regarded it as a "national necessity."

CHAPTER XV

DESPERATE BID

Ever since the year 1906, when Dadabhai Naoroji initiated the glorious ideal of *Swaraj*, every one of our leaders put it before himself as the final goal of the political future of India and every one of them, in his own way, contributed his share towards its realisation. Thus in our march towards freedom our history must assign a proper place to each, whether he be an anarchist, non-co-operator, Liberal, Moderate, Responsivist, Nationalist, Extremist, Swarajist or Independent. Although these various sections were, not infrequently, the cause of friction in the corporate public opinion, yet they all believed in the realisation of one final goal—the independence of India—and laboured for it sincerely thinking that they alone were right. But since the advent of Gandhism, *Swaraj* or independence of India gave rise to one serious question. Was it to mean the total severance of the British connection or was it the realisation of full responsible government within the British Commonwealth? The official policy of almost all of our political organisations has been silent. The Congress left it vague and the change of its creed in 1920 had led to the resignation of Mohammad Ali Jinnah from that organisation.

The vagueness of the official creed often resulted in the various and often conflicting interpretations placed upon it by individuals, and consequently Congress was a house divided against itself. Even the official policy of the Congress and the views of its prominent leaders had to be reversed frequently and the contemporary record of political activity is full of a series of contradictory experimentations.

For Mohammad Ali Jinnah, however, the path was clear. The aim before him was India's political progress reaching to its final goal of complete independence. But how was this progress to be made? Jinnah believed that India should accept and work out whatever measures of reforms the British Government conceded and introduced in this country. Side by side, however, he advocated that Indian leaders should concentrate upon the education of the people and their social uplift and economic amelioration. This would lead to the building up of a strong public opinion and people of India would be trained to take their due share in the affairs of the country. In other words it would lead to increased political consciousness. In his opinion such a consciousness was absolutely necessary in order that the bulk of the Indian population might understand the meaning of the term representative government and the elementary rules of democracy. For those also who were connected with the Government machinery, either

as members of the Legislatures or those of the Government itself, the same programme was outlined. He believed more in constructive than destructive criticism. He had faith in co-operation and believed that all the responsible leaders of the country should "put their heads together," in order to face facts and discuss things with a determination to arrive at conclusions which would do honour to them and bring good to India. According to him the British Government was a party to be reckoned with just as there were others in India—Hindus, Muslims and minorities.

From the very beginning of his public career, therefore, Mohammad Ali Jinnah placed before himself the task of assisting whichever party or individual was engaged in improving the general conditions of the Indian people and prepare them for shouldering the responsibility of their own affairs. For some time past the leaders of His Majesty's Government and their agents in India had publicly committed themselves to a progressive policy of reforms in India. Jinnah was willing to take them at their word. He believed that if Indians co-operated with the Government of India they could place the latter in a tighter corner of obligation to keep their word than by keeping aloof from the Government machinery. In this way, he thought, the Government would be forced to introduce reforms at an accelerated speed, or otherwise they could

be thoroughly exposed. While, therefore, his activities were multifarious in the realm of wise and useful legislation, such as improvements in the Indian Criminal Law, Hindu and Muslim Law, efficient working of the Railways, betterment of the condition of Indians overseas, protection of trade and industries, currency and coinage systems and the like, he picked out a few of the broader topics to which all his efforts were mainly directed. Elementary education was the central pivot on which the whole of Indian progress was to revolve and in league with and under the guidance of Gokhale he was among the first and foremost who threw in all their weight to bring home to the Government the need of the introduction of an effective system of primary education—an object which even to this day remains unfulfilled. But in other things, on which he laid great stress, such as the Indianisation of the Army, introduction of representative institutions in the Government with increased association of Indians with them, Indianisation of the higher services and holding of examinations for recruitment in them simultaneously in India with Great Britain and the introduction of progressive political reform, he has gained no small measure of success. Whenever, therefore, a question arose wherein Jinnah had the remotest possibility of India's advance in the political field he had whole-heartedly co-operated. It was, for him, a question of extracting power from the

foreigners and establishing precedents from which there was no going back. Reform, for him, was more equivalent to an increased scope for his countrymen's association with the day to day administration of India. His earliest efforts were directed to achieve this object. The reader is well aware how during the Morley-Minto Reforms he had prevailed upon Sinha to accept the first Law Membership. It was with this object alone he had accepted to serve on the Muddiman Committee and submitted his report along with the other members of the minority.

In February 1925, the Legislative Assembly recommended to the Governor-General-in-Council 'that a Committee including Indian members of the Legislature be immediately appointed to investigate and report (*a*) what steps should be taken to establish a military college in India to train Indian officers for the Commissioned ranks of the Indian Army; (*b*) whether when a military college is established in India it should supersede or be supplemented by Sandhurst and Woolwich so far as the training of the Indian officers is concerned; and (*c*) to advise at what rate the Indianisation of the Army shall be accelerated for the purpose of attracting educated Indians to a military career." Consequently the Indian Sandhurst Committee under the presidentship of Lieut.-General Sir Andrew Skeen, Chief of the General Staff,

and Mohammad Ali Jinnah along with Motilal Nehru had consented to serve on it. The Committee began its labours as early as August 1925 and gathered considerable evidence in India. The Committee later on appointed a sub-committee under the leadership of Jinnah with two other Indian members which went round the continent of Europe and visited a number of countries in order to examine the working of the various military colleges and report their findings to the main Committee. During the annual session of the League also, in December 1925, at Aligarh, he was the prime mover of a resolution which recognising that the Government of India Act was unsatisfactory laid down the principle of working the Reforms for what they were worth, in co-operation with the Hindus, in spite of the fact that the League President, Sir Abdur Rahim, had shown in his presidential address a tendency for separation from Hindus.

Side by side with this spirit of honest co-operation, however, Mohammad Ali Jinnah was one of those who were extremely vigorous in their demand of self-government for India, and the reader is well aware of his activities in this direction in his various capacities as a member of the Congress, League and Legislature and as a public man. On the 11th of March 1926, while discussing the annual Budget, speaking on a motion in the Assembly

that "demand for the Executive Council be omitted," he again stressed that political progress must be accelerated and demanded in vigorous terms the appointment of a Royal Commission, that would go into the matter in detail. The following is an extract from his speech.

" But at present, sir, the Budget, as far as I can see, has very little interest in it. Apart from that, the question—the question of vital and paramount interest—is that of the constitutional issue which I shall deal with. I do not wish to take the House into a long and weary history of this issue. I think it will be admitted that, when the Act of 1919 was passed, a large body of politically-minded people in this country, and I believe almost all important political organisations, held that these Reforms were not satisfactory and were disappointing. The Indian National Congress, one of the leading political organisations in the country at the time, met at Amritsar in December, 1919, and after a great deal of discussion and careful deliberation, decided to work the Reforms as far as they went, at the same time recording the opinion that they were not satisfactory and were disappointing. Now, sir, I felt from that moment that we had put our case before the highest tribunal, the Joint Parliamentary Committee. We fought step by step and we got a decision and the Act was passed, and as practical men we

felt that the only course open to us was to work the Reforms and show by working them what inherent and serious defects and difficulties existed in the working of those Reforms. But then came other events into which I do not wish to go. We had the upheaval with regard to the Punjab, the Jallianwala Bagh, and the Khilafat trouble and a large body of our countrymen refused to use these Reforms. At the same time I think the Honourable Members on the Treasury Benches will admit that there was a fairly large section that did not agree with that policy and that programme and they came into the various Legislatures and worked the Reforms. Then what do you find to be the attitude of the Government in 1921? It is described in the words of the Right Honourable Mr. Sastri, who, I think the House and even the Government will admit, is a fair and impartial politician. He says this in an article on Lord Reading's speech of 20th January, 1926:

'In the domestic politics of India one can only remember, on the one hand, the unexampled outburst of brotherliness and comradeship between Britishers and Indians when the non-co-operation cloud darkened the sky. Racial distinctions were abolished, repressive laws were repealed. We had a vision of Sandhurst and Woolwich, and official and non-official Europeans joined in a recommendation that our constitution should be revised

before 1929. How near we then were to the millennium. As soon as the political sky began to clear and the too trustful Liberals were flung overboard, the Sandhurst and kindred promises were repudiated. Lord Peel cast back the Assembly's request for constitutional advance in its teeth, and the Rowlatt Act, with all its accursed provisions, came back to life in the Bengal Ordinance.'

"Now I ask the Honourable the Home Member who represents the Government, is this not a true picture of your policy and your attitude? Sir, to get back nearer. In 1924, when this Assembly met at the very outset during the first session, a resolution was passed in this Assembly in February 1924, to which we got a reply from the Government which certainly was not satisfactory. In the first instance we were told that a departmental Committee would be appointed to inquire into the defects and the difficulties in the working of this constitution. That made not only the Assembly restive but the country outside was disappointed and at that time Lord Oliver, the then Secretary of State for India, and the then Prime Minister, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, both in their pronouncements, in order to allay the public opinion, conveyed the idea that Government had every desire to come into closer consultation with the real representatives of public opinion and they impressed upon us in the clearest language that

they were going to adopt methods and means of so doing and that this Committee which was announced was not a device or a design for delaying the solution of this question. Then, sir, we had the Muddiman Committee. The Muddiman Committee, as you all know, as Honourable Members here all know, had its hands tied by the peculiar terms of reference, but nevertheless there was a minority report signed by men like Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, my friend the Honourable Sir Sivaswamy Aiyer, and Dr. Paranjpye, who command the confidence of the Government, who have worked inside the Government and who have worked outside the Government. And what did they say? They made their recommendation. And what was their recommendation? Can anyone make a mistake about it? Is there any doubt about it, as to what their recommendation was? Their recommendation was, sir, if I may read those few lines, this. After going through an elaborate inquiry and after taking the evidence of a number of witnesses, both officials and non-officials, they came to this conclusion. This is the passage that I wish to read to the House. They said:

'The present system has failed and in our opinion it is incapable of yielding better results in the future.'

And then they point out the various defects, principal, fundamental, inherent

defects, and having pointed that out they further say :

'We were precluded by the terms of our reference from examining those various proposals which were of a fundamental character and which required the overhauling of the constitution.'

And, therefore, the Minority Report concludes by saying this :

'We do not think that the suggested amendments, if effected, will afford valuable training towards responsible government or will provide any solution of the difficulties which we have discussed in our chapter on Political Conditions or that they will strengthen the position of the Provincial Governments in relation to their legislatures or of the Central Government in relation to the Assembly. The majority of our colleagues say that no alternative transitional system has been placed before us. We think that no such alternative transitional system can be devised which can satisfactorily solve the administrative or political difficulties that have been brought to our notice. To our mind the proper question to ask is not whether any alternative transitional system can be devised but whether the constitution should not be put on a permanent basis with provisions for automatic progress in the future so as to secure

stability of the Government and willing co-operation of the people. We can only express the hope that a serious attempt may be made at an early date to solve the question. This attempt should be made, whether by the appointment of a Royal Commission with freer terms of reference and a larger scope of inquiry than ours or any other agency is a question which we earnestly commend to the notice of the Government.'

" Sir, this we earnestly commended to the notice of the Government on the 3rd December 1924. Since then we had the pronouncement of Lord Birkenhead in consultation with His Excellency the Viceroy who was summoned for this purpose among others. We had the statement of Lord Birkenhead and to get to the immediate issue what does he say? He says that a Royal Commission can be accelerated. The one precise condition was that we should show a spirit of co-operation. Now that statement was made last year, and to use his own words—and I should like to draw the attention of the House to his own words—this is what he said :

'But I do not hesitate to make clear my own view that it was not the intention of the Legislature to attempt to shackle succeeding Governments, if a spirit of cheerful and loyal co-operation was generally exhibited, on the one hand, or if, on the other, grave and glaring

defects disclosed themselves. It would indeed have been an assumption of omniscience alien to the Anglo-Saxon tradition for Parliament to assume so high and prophetic a gift as to declare that in no circumstances should the date of the Commission be accelerated. In fact the door was never closed. It is, on the contrary, open today.'

"I do not see the door open at all. As far as I can see it is almost shut, nay, banged. But the condition is there clear and precise. 'There can be no consideration until we see everywhere among the responsible leaders of Indian thought evidence and genuine desire to co-operate with us in making the best of the existing constitution.' Now, sir, this is the formula which has been repeated by the Government *ad nauseam* on every occasion whenever a debate on this question is raised. It was repeated by the Vicercy when he returned. It was repeated by the Home Member when the debate took place in September last year, and it has been repeated again by His Excellency the Viceroy in addressing the Legislature on the 20th of January last...

"Now, sir, I ask the Government and the Home Member, who represents the Government here today, what does he want? Does he want that a certain section, a certain body of politicians who have committed them-

selves to a particular course of action, should give up their course of action according to your wish? And because they will not make a declaration that they are willing to give up that course of conduct, whatever may be the opinion of the whole country or the rest of the country, until those particular men eat their words, will you continue saying there is no co-operation or that it is better, but not sufficient? Is that the position the Government take up? I ask the Government to consider this. Is there a single political organisation, is there a single political body in the country that has not pressed the Government at least for a Royal Commission to be appointed forthwith? Are you going to treat the rest of the opinion in this country with contempt, because you have a certain section that you consider is impossible or irreconcilable or will not yield to you in the exact manner in which you desire? Is that your answer to the whole of India? You ask me to get what? Every party to agree? I ask you, do you honestly mean that that is possible, that it will ever be possible in India or in any other country in the world that all parties must agree, and till then the Government will not move?

Then came the rudest shock to all the lovers of unity. Maulvi Syed Murtaza had brought a motion before the Assembly on

Frontier Reforms. Mohammad Ali Jinnah rose to speak on the 18th of March 1926. His speech is almost a pathetic piece of oration. He was amazed and surprised to find leaders like Motilal Nehru and Malaviya opposing the motion and appealed to them for better sense. Mohammad Ali Jinnah could not think for a moment that Hindus would stand in the way of Frontier Reforms much less leaders of standing with a remarkable record of selfless public service to their credit. And indeed the history of that unfortunate debate is a sad page in the development of Hindu public opinion. In no country of the world its people have grudged such a vestige of advance for their fellow countrymen.

Even then, however, Mohammad Ali Jinnah did not lose heart. He was undaunted by this lapse of nationalism on the part of Hindus and thought that it was a tentative phase. He believed in the communal unity and he had to labour for it, no matter what shape Indian " Nationalism " was acquiring. The next session of the League came to be held in Delhi and Jinnah once again moved the main resolution on the revision of the Government of India Act. The resolution ran thus: "That the All-India Muslim League has repeatedly defined its position with regard to the real advance in the future constitution of India in its sessions in 1924 and 1925 and reaffirms the resolutions passed at its session

at Aligarh in December 1925 to the following effect, namely, that whereas the speedy attainment of full responsible Government is one of the declared objects of the League and it is now generally felt and recognised that the conception of Swaraj should be translated into the realm of practical politics and whereas it is the declared policy of the British Government also to enable the people of India to take a decisive part in the moulding of their own destinies which is marked by the declaration of August 1917 and the enactment of 1919 which formed a definite epoch in the history of India, a herald of time when India will possess full autonomy and will rank as an equal with the Dominions and with the United Kingdom itself as a member of the British Commonwealth, the All-India Muslim League is of opinion that the present constitution of India must be amended and urges that for this purpose the Government should undertake the revision of the Government of India Act 1919 and without any delay appoint a Royal Commission to formulate after due enquiry and investigation a scheme so as to place the Indian Constitution on a sound and permanent basis with provisions for automatic progress to establish full responsible Government in India and thereby secure stability in government and willing co-operation of the people, provided however, that for any scheme of future constitution of India the All-India Muslim League reaffirms and unequivocally

declares that the following basic and fundamental principles must be secured and guaranteed, namely, (1) All legislatures of the country and other elected bodies be constituted on the definite principles of an adequate and effective representation of the minorities in every province without reducing the majority in any province to a minority or even to equality, (2) Representation of communal groups shall continue to be by means of separate electorates as at present provided that it shall be open to any community at any time to abandon its separate electorates in favour of a joint electorate, (3) Any territorial redistribution that might at any time be necessary shall not in any way affect the Muslim majority in the Punjab, Bengal and North-West Frontier Province, (4) Full religious liberty, that is, liberty of belief, worship, observances, propaganda, association and education shall be guaranteed to all communities, (5) No bill or resolution or any part thereof shall be passed in any legislature or in any other elected body if three-fourths of the members of any community in that particular body oppose such bill or resolution or part thereof on the ground that it would be injurious to the interests of that community or in the alternative such other method is devised as may be found feasible and practicable to deal with such case. The League hereby appoints a committee of the following gentlemen as the Central Committee in order to formulate a scheme so far as

possible in consultation with a committee or committees that may be appointed by other political organisations and to report the same to the Council of the League for the consideration of the League and for submission to the Royal Commission when it is appointed. The League also appoints provincial committees with power to add to their number to prepare and define a scheme of future reforms to be submitted to the Central Committee for their consideration."

The following were members of the Central Committee referred to in the above resolution: M. A. Jinnah, Sir Abdur Rahim, Abdul Aziz, Sir Mohammad Shafi, Sheikh Abdul Qadir, Maulvi Mohammad Yakub, Sir Ali Imam, Mohammad Husain and Sir Abdul Qaiyum.

Jinnah in moving the resolution made a long speech. He said the resolution laid down as the first proposition that the League desired that the Government of India Act 1919 must be amended and that a definite advance of a democratic character must be made. Muslims were not in agreement with any policy of non-co-operation with Government nor did they sanction the policy of obstruction or of making the reforms impossible. From the last elections it was clear that Muslims wished to work the Reforms for what they were worth. They were anxious to

see that their future position in the country was thoroughly defined and secure. Talking about the Lucknow Pact Jinnah pointed out that it was not made at the request of the Muslims, but the initiative came from the National Congress although there were differences of opinion. But he thought that the pact was the finest temporary solution of the difficulties. He then referred to the Congress point of view on the subject of the Muslim position in the country and said it was far from assuring. No responsible Congressman or Hindu leader had come forward with a concrete proposal with regard to the future of the Muslim community. Individual pronouncements were, however, made by one person or other but nothing definite was forthcoming. There was no escaping away from the fact that communalism did exist in the country. By mere talk and sentiment it would not be removed. Nationalism could not be created by having mixed electorates. The history of Canada showed that separate electorate system did not prove an obstacle in the progress of representative Government. He earnestly appealed to the leaders of the Congress and the Hindu Mahasabha to accept the hand of friendship and fellowship of the Muslim community to meet and confer and exchange views in a real seriousness, to find out a solution. A resolution to that effect which he was moving was sent in 1924 to the Secretaries of the Congress but no encourag-

ing reply was received by the League. He appealed to Muslim and Hindu leaders to let the past be forgotten and the hatchet be buried and meet in a spirit of friendship and fellowship for formulating a common demand. "We desire," said he, "nothing else but justice and fairness and I assure you that if we two communities can settle our differences it will be more than half the work for responsible Government won. But if unfortunately there is going to be a failure and it is our misfortune that we cannot come to a settlement, the next course open to Muslims is that we must prepare our own case for placing before the Royal Commission and fight the battle."

If the Royal Commission did not satisfy the Muslims they would carry their struggle to the highest tribunal. They would maintain that principle which was sacred and was a matter of life and death to them must be secured. But he hoped that there was a brighter future for Muslims. He hoped that better minds amongst the Muslims and Hindus would realise that the only course for India was to work in friendship, harmony and co-operation. He hoped that India would rise to that nationhood for which they all prayed.

In November, 1926, the Muslims of Bombay had once again returned Mohammad Ali Jinnah unopposed to the Assembly and he once again became the leader of the In-

dependent Party. But early in the following year when the Assembly met for the first time things took the shape of presenting a possibility of a working settlement between the Swarajists and Independents and negotiations between Jinnah and Motilal materialised considerably. In the realm of his life-long ambition—Hindu-Muslim unity—Jinnah once again made a desperate bid for its achievement. Hitherto the question of separate electorate for Muslims had been the main obstacle and remained still unsolved. Hindus had taken up an unbending attitude in the matter and Jinnah felt helpless. He now thought that he would try to induce his own community to tone down their demand so that an opening could be created for negotiations. On the 20th of March, 1927, a conference of Muslim leaders was held at Delhi under his presidentship and the question was examined from all angles and after long discussions and deliberations a formula was evolved.

The following is the text of the formula adopted by Muslim leaders :

> " Muslims should accept a settlement on the basis of the following proposals, so far as representation in the various legislatures in any future scheme of Constitution is concerned :

1. Sind should be separated from Bombay and constituted into a separate Province.

2. Reforms should be introduced in the N. W. F. Province and in Baluchistan on the same footing as any other Province. In that case, Muslims are prepared to accept a joint electorate in all Provinces so constituted, and are further willing to make to Hindu minorities in Sind, Baluchistan and the N. W. Frontier, the same concessions that Hindu majorities in other Provinces are prepared to make to Muslim minorities.

In the Punjab and Bengal the proportion of representation should be in accordance with the population. In the Central Legislature, Muslim representation shall not be less than a third, and that also, by a mixed electorate."

It will be seen from the above that the resolution does not contemplate less representation than that secured by the population in either the Punjab or Bengal, and that it

proposes to give to other Hindu minorities the same concessions as Muslim minorities are granted in other Provinces where the Hindus are in an overwhelming majority.

The Delhi Muslim proposals constituted a personal triumph for Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Nowhere else had a leader been able to induce his people, by means of argument, to change their outlook or even their policy overnight, at any rate not in India, and, as Mr. M. C. Chagla suggested, only the magic wand of Jinnah could accomplish the feat. Nationalist India was full of praise, and Hindu leaders, who had known how hard he had been working for the cause, showered on him honours in public as well as in private. They all agreed that in spite of his recent advocacy of the Muslim cause, his patriotism and love of unity was unquestionable. The Muslim proposals were, however, subject to ratification by the All-India Muslim League. They were to be considered by the Hindu leaders. The Congress Working Committee had partially agreed to them and had recommended them to the All-India Congress Committee for consideration. They were also to be considered by a conference of Hindu members of the Legislature. But on the eve of this conference, the *Hindustan Times*, a daily paper of Delhi, which was conducted by Hindu leaders like Pandit Malaviya and Lala Lajpat Rai, had commented upon the proposals at great length remarking

that the spirit behind them was one of "Heads I win, tails you lose." The paper asked in what way the establishment of joint electorates was connected with the separation of Sind and introduction of reforms in Baluchistan and N. W. Frontier. It said that the Muslims felt that in conceding to the Hindus the principle of joint electorate they were entitled to expect, as a price of their concession, the separation of Sind and introduction of reforms in Baluchistan and N. W. Frontier Province, where they constitute immense majority. The *Hindustan Times*, however, desired to make it clear, once for all, that Hindu Nationalist leaders were not asking for joint electorates because thereby there was any likelihood of any increase in the power of the Hindus in India, but because joint electorates, while fully protecting legitimate interests of all the minority communities, would help in the growth of a spirit of "nationalism" in eliminating rather than emphasising differences prevailing between different sections of the population in the country.

Proceeding, the paper observed, that if Muslims desired separation of Sind to ensure their dominance in one province, there are Hindus who would like to readjust the boundaries of Bengal and the Punjab to eliminate Muslim majorities from these two provinces. If the former were justified in urging their claim in what way were the latter not justified in pleading for theirs? It must, however, be

understood that the redistribution of the provinces should be undertaken, if it was at all undertaken at any time, not to establish or destroy majorities but to facilitate administration of certain areas, and if separation of Sind was necessary to achieve this end, Muslims might feel sure that the Hindu leaders would have no hesitation in agreeing to their wishes ; but if this separation was asked for merely to serve a sectional purpose, even Muslims must admit that if they could justify separation of Sind on communal grounds, why could Hindus not ask for readjustment of the Punjab and Bengal to suit a communal purpose? The object the Muslims had in view, according to the *Hindustan Times*, was to obtain as much as they could and concede as little as possible. Concluding, the Hindu paper remarked : "We cannot but condemn the spirit of petty bartering that has inspired the resolution and feel amazed that such national leaders as Dr. Ansari, Maulana Mohammad Ali and Mr. Jinnah should have appended their signatures to it. If Muslims agree to joint electorates, we can assure them that Hindu leaders will be prepared to meet them half-way in other things and will be only too glad to concede reasonable and legitimate demands of the Mohammadans and to consider in exactly that spirit the question of Muslim representation in the Assembly or the separation of Sind and of introduction of reforms in the Frontier and Baluchistan."

Thus was shaped Hindu opinion regarding this question and the result can well be imagined.

By the middle of May, 1927, however, the All-India Congress Committee met at Bombay to consider the Muslim proposals. The Congress President threw in all his weight and finally a unanimous decision was reached accepting the Muslim formula. For those who do not see eye to eye with Mohammad Ali Jinnah today, the events of these years would not be without surprise, but the facts prove beyond doubt that amongst those who were sincerely and honestly labouring for unity between Hindus and Muslims he stood foremost, even as he does today. Some contemporary writers have treated this particular event lightly. Others have completely ignored it. "When the A. I. C. C. met in Bombay," writes Sitaramayya in his *History of the Congress*, "on the 15th and 16th May, there was a formula evolved by the Working Committee placed before it and approved of by it, which dealt with the Hindu-Muslim problem. Read at this distance of time and with a knowledge of the numerous transformations the question has since undergone, the formula of Bombay cannot fail to strike us as academic. Mr. S. Srinivasa Iyengar was anxious to settle this problem, but he had no grip over issues in all their seriousness. It is not the evolution of a formula that was required, but the approxima-

tion of the hearts, a clearing of the minds, of the two great communities." But, really speaking, the period was the turning point in India's political history, as it completely exposed the Hindu mentality towards the question of Reforms.

On the decision of the Congress a bitter criticism followed. Hindus were all up in arms and insinuated their fellow countrymen by suggesting that the formula arrived at was not in the interest of India. On the 30th May 1927, therefore, Mohammad Ali Jinnah issued the following statement in order to counteract the vicious propaganda against the Muslim offer.

"The Muslim leaders' offer to Hindus is not, perhaps, fully appreciated both by Hindus and Musalmans. This appears to be so because of certain communications that I have received and the interpretation put upon it in certain section of the press and the opinions expressed. I, therefore, wish to make it clear that the offer to accept a settlement on the basis of the proposal made therein is subject to what I would call conditions precedent before Musalmans would be prepared to accept joint electorates with reservation of seats.

"These conditions are *sine qua non* :

1. "That Sind should be separated from

Bombay Presidency and constituted into a separate province.

2. " That Reforms should be introduced in North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan on the same footing as any other province in India and Hindus should agree to support this demand of the Musalmans.

" It is in the event of these conditions being accepted that the Musalmans would agree to joint electorates with reservation of seats in all the provinces and make the same concessions to the Hindu minorities in the matter of number of representation in three provinces of Sind, North-West Frontier Province and Baluchistan, as the Hindu majority provinces would be prepared to make to Musalman minorities. This matter of concessions can be discussed and settled by the responsible committees that may be appointed by the two communities respectively.

" In the Punjab and Bengal the proportion of representation should be in accordance with population. In the Central Legislature Muslim representation should not be less than one-third, also through mixed electorates with reservation of seats. This offer is interdependent and can only be accepted or rejected in its entirety. The Hindu leaders have in their meeting held in Delhi on 23rd March, 1927, appointed a committee consisting of representatives of all provinces to frame de-

finite proposals after consulting Hindu opinion and make an early report. I, therefore, trust that the country will give the fullest consideration to the offer that is made, without any heat or passion being created and in a calm and impartial atmosphere.

"I may point out that in this offer, which is far-reaching, the most notable feature is its recognition that separate electorates can only be got rid of by a thorough adoption of the system of give and take. I trust that it will be criticised in a spirit of toleration. The question of separate electorates or mixed electorates is after all a method and a means to an end. The end in view is that Musalmans should be made to feel that they are secured and safeguarded against any act of oppression on the part of the majority and that they need not fear that during the transitional stage towards the development of a National Government, the majority would be in a position to oppress or tyrannise over the minority as majorities are prone to do in other countries. It must be recognised that under the circumstances and under prevailing conditions it is essential that the political equipoise must be maintained. It is to maintain this balance that the Musalmans have taken a simpler and more just method with the reciprocity clause. If this main proposition were accepted by the Hindus, then I feel that it will lead to a hopeful atmosphere and a settlement is within reach.

"I am personally not wedded to separate electorates, although I must say that the overwhelming majority of Musalmans firmly and honestly believe that it is the only method by which they can be secure. I think there are advantages and disadvantages in a system of separate electorates. Yet I am not prepared to subscribe to the view that separate electorates will constitute an effective bar to the growth and development of a representative Government. On the other hand, I cannot say that the acceptance of the system of mixed electorates is free from objections under the prevailing conditions or that it will create complete nationalism the next day. The question, therefore, of a system of separate or mixed electorates is, as I said before, more a question of method and means to an end. Therefore, the real issue is how to give a real sense of confidence and security to the minorities.

"The other questions, namely, the formulas regarding the share of Musalmans in the services of the country, safeguards in the legislatures against bills and resolutions which may affect religion, custom, usage or inter-communal interest and the question regarding other elective bodies can, I think, be solved if the major proposal contained in the offer could be agreed upon.

"As soon as I receive a definite answer

to the offer from Hindu leaders, the next step I would like to take would be to call a meeting of the members of the Central Committee of the All-India Muslim League, the Committee appointed by the Khilafat Conference, the executive members of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema, the Muslim members of the Council of State and the Assembly at an early date, and may form a small Committee at this meeting with a view to discussing other matters with the Committee or Committees that the Congress, the Mahasabha and other political organisations in the country may appoint, and then any settlement that may be finally arrived at by these Committees would, of course, be subject to ratification by the various organisations of the country, both Hindu and Muslim.

"I may in conclusion say that no time should be lost in bringing about a speedy settlement at this critical juncture."

Soon after this, the Khilafat Committee called a Unity Conference in the month of August over which Jinnah presided and after two days a strong appeal for unity was issued. A month later the Unity Committee sat at Simla and discussed various aspects of the question but unfortunately, once again, no tangible result was achieved. A Sub-Committee was appointed and it issued another statement deprecating the communal riots and appealing to "all people and all men of light

and leading throughout the country, to use their best endeavours to prevent such riots, to put an end to communal tension and to persuade their co-religionists not to take the law into their own hands even under provocation." The Sub-Committee also submitted its report to the main Committee, which adjourned after some time vesting power in Jinnah to convene the Conference if he received proper requisition for it.

CHAPTER XVI

ANOTHER BID

Mohammad Ali Jinnah's endeavours towards the achievement of the ideal of independence were now directed from two sides. He sincerely hoped that he could ultimately bring Hindus and Muslims on one platform to achieve a common goal, and, as has been pointed out in the last chapter, he made a desperate bid for it. But the atmosphere in the country and certain important factors not without a historical background made this union impossible and the cause suffered a set-back. On the other hand, he persevered with his old policy of gradual reform and missed no opportunity to impress it upon the Government that Indians should be more closely associated with the day-to-day administration of the country and also with the other services.

The Skeen Committee had submitted its report to the authorities and action had yet to be taken on it. In September 1927, Dr. Moonje moved a resolution in the Legislative Assembly that effect should be given forthwith to the recommendations of the Skeen Committee, and on the 22nd Mohammad Ali Jinnah rose

to speak on it. It was an utterance which will ever remain memorable to his credit.

The official attitude towards the resolution demonstrated that the move was much resented. This was not in keeping with the spirit under which things were moving so far as other measures of the Government were concerned. In fact it was quite contrary to the general assurances and promises that the British Government had advanced regarding the establishment in India of a Military College. The whole thing shocked Jinnah to the core and he concluded his speech in the following terms:

" In conclusion, sir, I would say this : I am aware that a certain clique exists in England. The India Office is surrounded by it and the only place that we went to and that had its atmosphere fouled by this clique was Sandhurst. At every other place we were received and treated with every consideration ; Sandhurst was the only place which was sought to be spoiled by this clique ; and I say to the better-minded Europeans who are in this country and to the better-minded Englishmen in Great Britain, if this is your message from your youth, that they are not willing to co-operate, if they are not willing to work and take their rank according to their merits in this country, tear up the Declaration of August 1917, tear it up now and here and say to the

people of India, we are here to rule and nothing else. Sir, I find there may be some difficulty because it may be said after all you have got to deal with young men. But who is responsible for poisoning their minds? It was the same old story when the Indian Civil Service was being Indianised, when we were told in this country by many who now sit on the Treasury Benches, 'If you are going to Indianise the Civil Service, we shall tender our resignation ; we are not going to be your servants.' It was the same story when the Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms were introduced. We were told by many Englishmen that they would leave this country rather than submit to these reforms, as they could not work the reforms. But we find, sir, we have survived those threats, and I find that the Treasury Benches are full of those gentlemen some of whom probably had threatened to resign, but they probably thought better of it. But I say, sir, let us not be carried away by these threats..."

On the 8th of November the Viceroy in his statement announced the appointment of a Statutory Commission which was to be presided over by a lawyer, Sir John Simon. The Commission consisted of six other members of Parliament. The object of this All-White Commission was to elicit Indian opinion on constitutional reforms and the Legislative Assembly was asked to appoint a Select Com-

mittee that would draw up proposals to lay them before the Commission. The Provincial Legislatures were expected to do likewise.

The all-white character of the Commission was too much of an affront to be tolerated by India. Jinnah rose once more to the occasion and gave a lead. An opportunity had again presented itself to him by means of which he hoped to bring about a settlement of the internal communal problem. As a purely political proposition too, the Simon Commission was wholly unacceptable. Almost immediately after the Viceroy's announcement Mohammad Ali Jinnah sent a telegram to the Labour Party in Parliament in order to enlist their support for the cause of India. Motilal Nehru, who was at that time in England, also tried to do likewise, but failed. In India, Jinnah had galvanised public opinion and had prepared the ground for a befitting boycott of the Commission. The following statement which Jinnah issued in this connection is historically important:

"I consulted by wire a few prominent leaders in different parts of India with a view to adopting concerted action regarding the announcement of the Statutory Commission. The answers I received made it clear that owing to the provincial fixtures to which they were already committed in their respective provinces and having regard to distance a

meeting at Bombay or any other central place at an early date was not feasible, although they emphasised the necessity of joint concerted action. As the question will soon be taken up by both the Houses of Parliament in England, I thought it was most essential that authoritative opinion of an all-India character should be expressed in time to reach London before the final decisions are taken by His Majesty's Government. I, therefore, circulated a draft manifesto, with a covering letter, requesting the various prominent leaders to authorise me on or before the 15th instant to include their names as signatories to the manifesto to be issued, if approved of by them.

"I am glad to say that I have received, so far, the most powerful and influential support from all parts of India, from the foremost leaders of the Indian National Congress, the All-India Muslim League, the All-India Liberal Federation, the Federation of Indian Chambers and the Mill-owners' Association. I have not included the names of leaders of the Hindu Mahasabha as I received a wire from Lala Lajpat Rai dated Lahore, 15th, as follows: 'Have wired to Mr. Jayakar, awaiting his reply' and subsequently a telegram from Mr. Jayakar dated Poona, 16th, which reads: 'My party supports boycott, but prefers to issue its own statement. Copy posted to your address.' I have not yet

received a reply from Pandit Madan Mohan Malavia and Dr. Moonje.

" I have not included the names of the President and President-elect of the Indian National Congress amongst the signatories to the manifesto, for reasons stated in their messages which speak for themselves and which are as follows :

" From Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar and Mr. Rangaswami Iyengar, dated Madras, 14th November :

" 'Your manifesto omits self-determination and also Assembly and Congress demand; concedes the need for an inquiry and proceeds solely on the need for a mixed Commission. Moreover, abstention is made qualified and conditional. The Congress Working Committee's resolutions and the Bengal and Madras manifestoes have adopted unconditional boycott. Regret cannot sign your present draft. Pray reconsider. Let us all stand together for simple abstention, each party keeping its reason to itself or stating all the reasons together.'

" From Dr. M. A. Ansari, Karnal, 15th November :

" Agree with the draft joint statement, except the last sentence which should read

"unless a round table conference, in which British and Indian statesmen" would participate as plenipotentiaries, is invited or at least a Commission with majority of Indians sitting on equal terms is set up, we cannot conscientiously take any part or share in the work of the Commission as at present constituted.'

"The other leaders of the Congress who were consulted, adopted the same line. The manifesto and the names of the signatories are as below :

"'We have given the most anxious consideration to the announcement made in the Houses of Parliament and the statement of His Excellency the Viceroy and the appeal of the Premier regarding the constitution and programme for the Statutory Commission. We have come to the deliberate conclusion that the exclusion of Indians from the Commission is fundamentally wrong, and that the proposals about Committees of Legislatures being allowed to submit their views to the Commission, and later to confer with the Joint Parliamentary Committee, are wholly inadequate to meet the requirements of the case. The underlying principle of the scheme, that Indians are to have no authoritative voice either in the collection of proper materials and evidence or in the taking of decisions by way of recommendations of the

Commission to Parliament, is of such a character that India cannot with any self-respect acquiesce in it. Unless a Commission on which the British and Indian statesmen are invited to sit on equal terms is set up we cannot conscientiously take any part or share in the work of the Commission as at present constituted.' "

There followed a long list of signatories.

On the 24th November Lord Birkenhead, the then Secretary of State for India, in moving the resolution on the Commission in Parliament expressed the view that he regarded the Commission as "an exceptionally intelligent jury coming to India with no preconceived prejudice." His Lordship emphasised the fact that the Committee of the Indian Legislature had been invited in a spirit of great sincerity to co-operate as colleagues with the Commission and explained that the difficulty of finding truly representative Indians stood in the way of including them on the Commission. It was a customary announcement which proved to be eyewash. A suitable reply had to be given to his Lordship by India. The duty of voicing the sentiments of a wronged India was ably discharged once again by Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

"After the announcement by the Secretary of State for India of what he called the 'Imperial Proposals,' in reply to the strong

opposition, he appealed to India not to pass judgment until he placed his reasons in support of the Commission and its programme of work. I have carefully read his Lordship's speech and the debate that took place in the House of Lords and the Commons. Lord Birkenhead has relied upon the history of India written by his ancestors and drawn conclusions which are opposed to the present conditions in India and has derived satisfaction by calling them logical. If he has convinced the British people and Parliament that India is a museum of differing communities and interests and that she is seething with warring factions, then India's case for responsible government stands condemned. And what is the good of going through the farce of appointing a Parliamentary Commission by a cabinet, whose spokesman has summed up the position of India and condemned it in advance? If Lord Birkenhead, in selecting the personnel of the Commission had to consider the conflicting schools of thought in England regarding India's advance and had to secure two members of the Tory Party, one member of the Liberal Party and two members of the Labour Party and two representing the blue blood of England, what wonder is there that we may also require a few men to represent a vast country like India and the various interests concerned? But if it is suggested that India cannot produce a few men who will command the confidence of

their countrymen, then it is the grossest misrepresentation and the gravest wrong done to her by the Secretary of State for India, who professes sincerity and a desire to help India.

"The underlying idea is the arrogant assertion of the principle that Indians cannot be allowed to share in the responsibility or in the decisions that are taken concerning the future constitution of India. And, says Lord Birkenhead, so long as that central principle is maintained intact he does not mind what else the Commission may do. This is what he says: 'If without destroying our central scheme from which we do not intend to depart, the noble Lords can suggest any method in which I can make it even plainer that our purpose is not to affront Indian opinion but rather to conciliate and make it friendly to us, it shall most deeply be considered.' But, this central scheme, which is a *fait accompli*, is the cause of our grievance and involves the humiliation of India.

"Lord Birkenhead resorted to a legal argument and resurrected what was in the head of Mr. Montagu through his surviving colleague, Lord Chelmsford. He says, 'I have no doubt whatever, speaking as a constitutional lawyer, that the framers of the original and determining Act, when they spoke of a Commission, contemplated a Parliamentary Commission. It is true that they did not so

state in the terms, but I drew the inference that they did not so state it because they thought it so obvious.' But Lord Chelmsford did not quite come up to the scratch.

"It was not very long ago that Lord Birkenhead himself, if I remember rightly, stated that the best brains of the Empire would be called upon to compose the Statutory Commission under the Government of India Act, when such a Commission was appointed. Now, let us consider what this Commission will do under Section 84-A of the Government of India Act, because the resolution merely says —and we can only go by the terms of the resolution—that 'this House concurs in the submission of the following persons, namely Sir John Simon, Viscount Burnham, Lord Strathcona and Mr. Cadogan, Mr. Walsh, Col. Lane-Fox and Major Attlee, to act as a Commission for the purpose of Section 84-A of the Government of India Act.' It is most extraordinary that each one of the speakers who took part in the debate conjured up a picture of his own as to what this Commission will do and i capable of doing. But we know what th Statute lays down as their terms of reference.

"Here I may quote the words of the Statute: '(1) The persons whose names are so submitted, if approved by His Majesty, shall be charged with the duty of enquiring into the working of the system of Government, growth of education and the development of

representative institutions in British India and matters connected therewith, and the Commission shall report as to whether and to what extent it is desirable to establish the principle of responsible Government or to extend, modify or restrict the degree of responsible Government then existing therein, including the question whether the establishment of second chambers of the local legislatures is or is not desirable. (2) The Commission shall also enquire into and report on any other matter affecting British India and the provinces which may be referred to the Commission by His Majesty. There is no such reference in the present proposals under this part of the section.'

"With great deference to those who took part in the debate in the two Houses of Parliament, I ask, is it possible that the function given to the Committee of the Central Legislature to offer criticism and objections in consultation with the Parliamentary Committee would lead to any good results, and is it expected that any substantial modifications or amendments could be made in the recommendations of a Commission of the calibre and integrity, for which they have received so eloquent a certificate not only from the Secretary of State for India but from all parties in both the Houses of Parliament, a Commission which is described as thoroughly impartial and one whose integrity cannot be questioned and

who will judge according to the standards known to Parliament and whose recommendations Parliament will consider instinctively their own when they make their report?

"One word about Lord Reading. He condemns all the politicians because at one time or other they had been parties to formulating proposals towards further advance in the constitution of India. Does he mean to suggest that the members of the Commission appointed have no views with regard to the future constitution for India? Some of them actually happened to be members of the Cabinet when the Muddiman Committee was appointed. And have these members given any guarantee that they will be unanimous in their report? Lord Birkenhead, at any rate, makes it clear as to what his real object is in having this Commission and what is expected of it. He says: 'There may not be a unanimous report now by this Commission. But at any rate we shall have a report which proceeds upon the same general point of view and principle.' I ask what does he mean by 'general point of view and principle.' Has the personnel of this Commission already formed their opinion on the 'general point of view' and decided upon the 'principle'? What are they?

"His Lordship did not make it clear. It follows, therefore, that they will only look for

FROM EVERY ANGLE A STATESMAN









details to support the 'general point of view and principle' which are already determined by them without the aid of any accredited Indian representative who could help them in collecting materials and evidence or shake them with regard to their *a priori* 'general point of view and principle' to which they are committed already. For these reasons amongst others, India cannot participate in this policy and share in the work of the Commission in any form or at any stage, because it is a complete negation of India's status as partner, which has been so repeatedly acknowledged by British statesmen."

A lead given in such trenchant words had a profound effect, and the country has never known a more complete boycott of an official move than that which greeted the Simon Commission. The whole of India stood to a man to demonstrate the collective disapproval of her peoples, and once again unity and communal harmony seemed to be within reach. This encouraged the indefatigable Jinnah once more and he resolved to renew his efforts. The Congress had, for its President, a Muslim of brilliant intellect and broad-minded outlook in Dr. M. A. Ansari and it was a hopeful sign. Srinivasa Iyengar, the last Congress President, had made considerable attempts in this connection and Dr. Ansari had only to pick up the threads of

since the debate in Parliament. They do not disclose any equality of status or power or opportunities to Indian Committees. The two letters of Sir John Simon addressed to the Viceroy and to Sir Sankaran Nair, laying down the line of procedure, have made it abundantly clear that in truth no such equality is vouchsafed to Indian Committees. The recording of some evidence *in camera*, the inability of Indian members to vote at the proceedings of the Commission, the power reserved to the Chairman to allow or not to allow members of the Central Committee to examine the witnesses in a province, and the secondary place assigned to the Indian Committee's report, make it abundantly plain that the Committees can at best play a subordinate part...

"For these reasons those parties which would, under conditions of equality of status, power and opportunities, have agreed to work in co-operation with the Commission, have felt it their duty to hold aloof from the Commission. The Congress Party has always stood out for a Round Table Conference, and it is obvious that it could not be expected to agree to a Commission of such a character. We feel, therefore, that the responsibility for the situations so created must rest (1) on the Government of India, (2) the British Government and (3) the Commission.

"In the circumstances, we appeal to

public men of all parties and to all political organisations in India to unite together (1) in settling sectional or communal differences, which we have every confidence will be settled soon to the satisfaction of all parties, (2) to prepare a draft constitution with the maximum amount of agreement, and to adopt it at a Convention and (3) to work for its establishment. We also appeal to the Legislative Councils of the United Provinces, Bengal, Bombay, Punjab, Bihar and Assam to follow the example of the Legislative Assembly, and of the Central Provinces and Madras. We dare not appeal to the Council of State."

On the 5th of May 1928, as if out of spite to the Simon Commission, Mohammad Ali Jinnah sailed for England by s. s. 'Rajputana' with Srinivasa Iyengar and Dewan Chamanlal as fellow passengers. Dewan Chamanlal in his usual racy style wrote an article on the daily life of the two leaders on board the ship, the relevant portions of which, so far as they concern the Muslim leader, are reproduced here. The article is important as it gives an account of Jinnah, the man and the politician. It indicates how deep-rooted is his patriotism and how sincere he is in his efforts. Dewan Chamanlal wrote :

" If leisure, according to Moreau-Christophe, is the real title of citizenship then the

truest citizens are to be found on board the "Rajputana." We have leisure to eat, a blessing that our politicians seem seldom to experience judging by their physique. We have leisure to watch humanity swimming, diving, playing deck-tennis or bridge, dancing and drinking. And above all we have leisure to talk. For we have on board two of the best talkers in India—Mohammad Ali Jinnah and Srinivasa Iyengar. It is no doubt their profession a to talk, but here, away from the political restrictions of their second profession, they talk freely and with refreshing frankness.

"The boat, it must be understood, is divided into two sections—Anglo-India and India. All outward-bound boats are so divided. I deliberately do not use the expression 'homeward-bound'. Occasionally Anglo-India relents, but generally it is with a motive or else out of sheer necessity. And the result is that the Indians are thrown upon their own resources, generally assembling together on the deck, in the lounge or at the dinner table. For those who talk about the inferiority complex this may be slightly embarrassing. But I do not know of an Indian on board who does not suffer from the superiority-complex. Outside his own country the Indian feels that the world was made for his benefit. He feels like the Helen of Theodectes :

Who dares reproach me with the name of slave

When from the immortal gods, on either side,
I draw my lineage.

"Of course it is the fashion to say that he does. But in reality this modern civilisation of ours is a very trying thing. For instance, Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar finds it very embarrassing. By gradual process he has today donned a silk lounge suit, and feeling very shy he has hidden his short front with a muffler lest those who had never before beheld him with a silk necktie should exhibit unnecessary enthusiasm or pay him more compliments than this brave step deserves. He has been carrying under his arm a whole library of Cook's literature concerning the Riviera and the continent. He knows now the things of all the trans-continental trains ...

"Of course, Mr. Jinnah has been taking full advantage of the situation. The temperature in the Red Sea had today gone down by about two degrees with the result that Mr. Jinnah found Mr. Srinivasa Iyengar reclining in my deck-chair well wrapped up against the buffeting but sultry breeze. In his usually sarcastic manner Mr. Jinnah asked Mr. Iyengar if he should lend him a blanket. It was with hesitation, induced by Mr. Jinnah's premature laughter, that the offer was declined.

"I said at the commencement of this article that we have had plenty of talk on

board the ship. A great deal of it has been of a political nature. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, it must be acknowledged, saved the situation in the Legislative Assembly over the Simon Commission. He expected no doubt that the spirit of amicability engendered in the Chamber would be productive of real unity. Today he is, unfortunately, frankly disgusted. Minor differences over Sind and majority representations by reservation and Reforms for the North-West Frontier Province have wrecked, for the moment, all chances of unity. 'Give me,' says Mohammad Ali Jinnah, 'three leaders to join me over a united programme, which was all but accepted at Delhi, and Swaraj will not be a mere dream but a matter brought within the realm of real politics.' I asked him to name the four men. He said: 'Pandit Motilal Nehru, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya and Lala Lajpat Rai.' He added, 'The first problem to solve and settle is the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity. This is not a mere phrase. It is a concrete proposition. I have talked even on board the ship with Indians belonging to every conceivable political group and each one deplores the intransigence of the leaders in not arriving at a settlement regarding the three issues named by me. Will the nation go to wreck and ruin if compromises and even surrender take place on these issues? And suppose we did settle the problem. I say that, then, the united voice of the nation would be irresistible.' I told him that I had

heard rumours from authentic sources that certain leaders did not in reality desire a settlement. He agreed with me. He said that personal motives had played some part. He also had heard the story from reliable sources. But he added, ' You will be surprised that the people are with us whole-heartedly on the national issue. Why, in Bombay the *hartal* which greeted the Simon Commission was entirely a spontaneous affair. I tell you if I had gone round Bombay with my colleagues on that day not a shop would have remained open and yet in spite of us the *hartal* was as near being complete as the circumstances would have permitted.' I suggested that perhaps one of the tragedies of the situation was that several of our leaders were trying to cope with a modern situation with out-of-date methods. It is not possible to run a Rolls Royce with knowledge only of the bullock-cart. We talked of Egypt. Why could the Egyptians succeed in being a perpetual menace to the peace of mind of Sir Austen Chamberlain and why could we not do the same to Lord Birkenhead? The moment Sir Austen Chamberlain made a discourteous remark about Egypt, out would come the students of Al Azhar and black flags and processions of protest would be the order of the day. Organisation is what we lacked, and organisation on economic and not emotional lines. Jinnah was fully alive to this. I think he is beginning

to realise the great potential power of organised labour.

"We talked of Gandhi. Humorously he alluded to the frantic attempts made by Mahatma Gandhi and Umar Sobhani to rope him into the Non-co-operation movement. He said he felt that the movement would fail. I said he was mistaken. The movement nearly succeeded. It failed merely because the Mahatma was not a politician. Jinnah agreed with me that if Mahatma Gandhi had had only a touch of Lenin in him the history of the last few years would have been different. 'Gandhi,' he said, 'is not a politician'—but he added, 'I wish he had been.'

"Jinnah is franky in a despondent mood. He is one of the few men who have no personal motives to nurse or personal aims to advance. His integrity is beyond question. And yet he has been the loneliest of men. He has never belonged to a party unless he himself was the party. Not that he has ever refused to work shoulder to shoulder with others (as for instance, in the case of the Nationalist Party of 1924), but he has never allowed any man to compromise his sense of integrity. There is a well-known story of the law-courts which reveals the type of man he is. A client came to him one day and asked his advice. The file was a voluminous one and Jinnah's fees enormous. The client said

he had only ten thousand rupees and Jinnah refused. Eventually the client pressed and suggested that Jinnah should stop looking at the file the moment the fee of ten thousand was exhausted (it was an arrangement at so much per hour) and gave his opinion on what he had read so far. When the accounts were made up the fee came to three thousand five hundred—and the balance was handed over by Jinnah to the client. Lahore lawyers who are quite used, of course, to such tenderness towards their clients will find nothing unfamiliar in this tale !

" Let me warn your readers that Jinnah is not going to Europe merely for a joyride. Great things are bound to happen during his stay in London. Serious attempts will be made to " get at " him. The French saying is : 'We shall see what we shall see.' For the moment, however, this closes the chapter of St. Jinnah of the Mount Pleasant just as we are near Mount Sinai where the Lord spoke to Moses."

CHAPTER XVII

NEHRU REPORT

The Nehru Committee came into being as the result of a resolution passed by the All-Parties Conference held at Bombay on the 19th of May 1928 in accordance with the directions of the Madras Sessions of the Indian National Congress in order to "consider and determine the principles of the constitution for India." The terms of the resolution were :

> "This Committee shall give the fullest consideration to the resolution of the Madras Congress on Communal Unity in conjunction with those passed by the Hindu Mahasabha, the Muslim League, the Sikh League and the other political organisations represented at the All-Parties Conference at Delhi and the suggestions that may hereafter be received by it ; the Committee will give due weight to the recommendations made by the various sub-committees of the All-Parties Conference at Delhi."

The reader is no doubt well aware of the political situation prevailing at the time in India, and the scope of the Madras resolution. But it will not be out of place to quote a few passages from the Nehru Report itself to refresh the memory. " On the 20th March, 1927," says the Report, " some prominent Muslim leaders met together in Delhi and put forward certain proposals on the Hindu-Muslim problem for the acceptance of the Hindus and the country. These proposals, which have come to be known as the " Muslim Proposals," laid down that Musalmans were prepared to agree to joint electorates in all provinces and in the Central Legislature provided (*i*) Sind was made into a separate province; (*ii*) The N. W. F. Province and Baluchistan were treated on the same footing as the other provinces; (*iii*) In the Punjab and Bengal the proportion of representation was in accordance with the population; and (*iv*) In the Central Legislature Muslim representation was not to be less than one-third."

To quote the Report :—

" These proposals were communicated to the Congress, and the Congress Working Committee the very next day passed a resolution appreciating the decision of the Muslim Conference to accept joint electorates and trusting that a satisfactory settlement would be arrived at on the basis of these proposals. A sub-committee was appointed to confer

with Hindu and Muslim leaders. The Congress Working Committee met again in Bombay from the 15th to the 18th May, 1927 and passed a lengthy resolution on the Hindu-Muslim question. This resolution proceeded on the basis of the Muslim proposals but was more detailed and dealt with some other matters also. The All-India Congress Committee which met in Bombay on the same dates unanimously adopted the same resolution with minor alterations. The principal change suggested on behalf of the Hindu leaders present was that Sind should not be separated on communal grounds but on general grounds applicable to all provinces. A change in the wording of the resolution removed this objection and it was passed unanimously."

It is, therefore, evident that Muslim Proposals were directly responsible for the appointment of the Nehru Committee or more appropriately for the creation of that friendly atmosphere which was most needed at the time when India was passing through a great crisis—a page which will ever remain to the credit of Mohammad Ali Jinnah in the annals of Indian patriotism.

The reaction of Hindu leaders, particularly those of the Hindu Mahasabha to Muslim Proposals, of which a fuller account was made in the foregoing pages and the subsequent attitude of the Muslim League in this regard,

need not be retold here. Suffice it to say that the task before the Nehru Committee was stupendous inasmuch as the main problem which had to be tackled by it was that of the Hindu-Muslim question. No doubt the Nehru Committee dealt with the question with all the seriousness it deserved, but it is clear that it failed to realise the intensity of feelings that backed the Muslim Proposals and its final conclusions were arrived at in utter disregard of the Muslim sentiments. Some of the recommendations of the Committee gave rise to bitter controversies as they raised great apprehensions in the minds of the Muslims. "As to the second difficulty," says the Report, "from the constitutional point of view the communal controversies are of no very great importance. But, whatever their relative importance might be, they occupy men's minds much more than matters of greater import and cast their shadow over all political work. We thus find ourselves face to face with a number of conflicting resolutions and recommendations all of which are equally entitled to our respect. But when we find that the view of the Madras Congress and the Muslim League is diametrically opposed to that of the Hindu Mahasabha and the Sikh League, we must respectfully express our inability to accept either in its entirety." It is clear, therefore, that the Congress and the League at the time were in complete accord and that the decisions of the Nehru Committee had been considerably

influenced by the views of the Mahasabha and the Sikh League.

Dealing with the question of separate electorates and separation of Sind the Report says: "The Muslims being in a minority in India as a whole fear that the majority may harass them, and to meet this difficulty they have made a novel suggestion that they should at least dominate in some parts of India. We do not here criticise their demand. It may have some justification in the present communal atmosphere, but we do feel that it has little to do with the premises we started from, unless indeed the best safeguard that one can have is to occupy a position of domination oneself. The Hindus on the other hand, although in a great majority all over India, are in a minority in Bengal and the Punjab and in Sind, Baluchistan and the N. W. F. Province. In spite of their all-India majority, they are afraid of the Muslims in these provinces."

At another place the Report says: "We suspect that the real opposition to separation is not due to any high national considerations, but grosser economic considerations; to the fear of the Hindus that their economic position might suffer if Muslims had the charge of affairs in a separated area. We are sure that Hindus of Sind are perhaps the most enterprising and adventurous. The traveller meets them in the four quarters of the world, carry-

ing on prosperous businesses and enriching their people at home by their earnings abroad. No one can take away this spirit of adventure and enterprise from the Hindus of Sind and so long as they have it their future is assured. It must be remembered also that the powers of a provincial government are limited and there is the Central Government which has power in all important departments. If, however, there is still some ground for fear that is a matter for safeguards, not of opposing a just demand."

In the light of the foregoing observations, therefore, the question of Muslim representation in the Central Legislature, which formed the basic principle of the Muslim proposals, was bound to become more important than that of separate electorates or of separation of Sind. But the Report dealt with it lightly and said, " So far as the Muslim demand is concerned it only remains for us to deal with that part of it which relates to reservation of one-third of the total number of seats in the Central Legislature for Muslims. This point was not directly raised or discussed at the informal conference, but we think that it is concluded by the general recommendations we have made in regard to reservation of seats. The principle we have adopted is that wherever such reservation has to be made for the Muslim minority it must be in strict proportion

to its population. The Muslims are a little less than one-fourth of the total population of British India and they cannot be allowed reservation over and above that proportion in the Central Legislature."

On top of that, the Committee also suggested that the residuary powers should vest in the Central Legislature. The result was evident. Shuaib Qureshi, a member of the Nehru Committee, recorded his vote of dissent then and there, and the subject formed the main plank of the forthcoming discussions in the following All-Parties National Convention at Calcutta and was the source of its ultimate failure. The Nehru Report was put before a Unity Conference held at Lucknow on the 28th of August 1928. The Conference accepted the principle laid down therein, although a few of the members were of the opinion that India's political goal should be complete independence and not Dominion Status as the Report envisaged and a bitter controversy followed.

On the 26th of October 1928 Mohammad Ali Jinnah arrived in India by the English Mail boat, "Razmak."

Since the publication of Nehru Committee's Report and especially since the meeting of the All-Parties Conference at Lucknow, Jinnah's return to his mother-country was very eagerly awaited by all the political sections

in the country. Jinnah's position in Indian politics was, indeed, very unique. Standing as he did in the rank of the greatest Indian politicians of his day, as President of the All-India Muslim League and as a trusted friend of Hindus, Jinnah exercised profound influence over his countrymen. His leadership was indispensable to India especially at this critical juncture of her political affairs. The fact that Jinnah had not hitherto expressed any definite opinion on the Nehru Report had naturally given rise to a considerable apprehension in certain quarters. Every one knew that in the present state of political affairs, much depended upon Jinnah's public utterances in regard to the burning problems of the day.

A special representative of a local newspaper interviewed him immediately after his landing in Bombay. Jinnah appeared to be a bit cautious and perfectly non-committal in whatever he said about the Nehru Report. He said: "I have not had enough time thoroughly to digest the Nehru Committee's Report because I did not get a copy of it until I came to Aden. Besides, I have not been able to get any authoritative report of the decisions of the Lucknow Conference which, I understand, has modified certain proposals contained in the Nehru Report with regard to Hindu-Muslim question. No doubt, the signatories of the Report and the various prominent men

who met at Lucknow have made an effort towards Hindu-Muslim unity, and one cannot help appreciating the great endeavour that they have made. Judging by the Nehru Report and newspaper reports of the Lucknow Conference, it seems that they have made a serious effort to meet the Delhi Muslim Proposals of March 1927. My position as President of All-India Muslim League is one which does not permit me to anticipate the decisions of the League. The Delhi Muslim Proposals, as you know, were endorsed by a specific resolution by the All-India Muslim League at Calcutta in December 1927. They were also practically accepted by the Indian National Congress at Madras in December 1927.

" After the meeting of the All-Parties Conference, the Council of the All-India Muslim League appointed a Committee with instructions to press for the acceptance of Delhi Muslim Proposals as endorsed by the Calcutta session of the Muslim League before proceeding with framing of the Constitution. But, unfortunately, no agreement was arrived at, although we were occupied for nearly a month, from February 11 to March 11, this year. However, the Nehru Report and the decisions of the Lucknow Conference are not like the Laws of the Medes and the Persians, the last word in the matter, because even the Lucknow Conference has decided that their proposals should be placed before an All-

India Convention which they decided to call at an early date. The Congress as usual and the League will be meeting in December next and I am hopeful that we shall yet find solution of this critical question. I would, in the meanwhile, appeal to all those who do not agree with the Lucknow proposals not to rebel but to keep calm and organise themselves with a view to pressing their point of view. I would particularly appeal to the Muslims not to be alarmed. I see no reason for consternation and stampede. Muslims should organise themselves, stand united and should press every reasonable point for the protection of their community."

Conversation then drifted towards the political parties in England and their professions of friendship towards India. The situation in England was summarised by Jinnah as follows: "In England, Westminster stands united, but in India we are divided. Personally I regret we were not able to solve Hindu-Muslim problem in February last. It has made a very great difference to the future of India. British opinion, as I gather, is that India has got plenty of intellect. They know that we have failed to realise the realities and we are wanting very much in discipline and organisation. They feel confident that those who are at the helm of the politics of India are lacking in statesmanship and foresight and that they will never be able to unite all parties in the

country. That is the one reason why Sir John Simon is determined, of course, according to the policy laid down in the higher quarters, to carry out the so-called enquiry and investigation even, as it is wired by the 'Reuters,' under police guard in the name of public meetings."

Proceeding, Jinnah gave his considered opinion that it was the biggest folly on the part of Indians to expect any substantial help from any one party in England. So far as India was concerned, they were all one. As a matter of fact, India was excluded from the policy and programme of every party, which had been published for the purpose of the forthcoming elections. Even the annual debate with regard to Indian affairs, which by the way was a mere farce and lasted only for a few hours, had been avoided by common consent of all Parties lest some back-bencher should rebel and criticise the appointment of the Simon Commission and the scheme thereof. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald indulged in a phrase here and a phrase there, his latest contribution being that he had discovered in this Commission a more democratic personnel, probably because there were two Labour members, and he thought that the Commission was going to build a golden bridge for India to walk across to London. These were mere platitudes and phrases. The Labour Party is deeply committed to the Commission as any

other party. There was only one hope for India and that was unity between Hindus and Muslims. Hindus should show a more generous and liberal mind and Muslims ought to show more trust.

Jinnah then adverted to the controversy regarding independence and Dominion Status. In this connection he observed that he had always maintained that India's policy could only be for the establishment of Dominion Responsible Government. That was one of the reasons why he had left the Congress and at Nagpur it was one of his objections to the decisions taken there in 1919.

For the purpose of eliciting public opinion on the Nehru Report and the Draft Constitution prepared by them, an All-Parties National Convention was called to meet at Calcutta on the 22nd December 1928 and invitations were issued to the various political organisations of the country and consequently to the Muslim League also. Mohammad Ali Jinnah was then the President of the League and he thought that it would not be of any use to send the delegates to the National Convention unless the League Council previously endorsed the principles underlying the Nehru Report, and requested Motilal Nehru to postpone the Convention so that a meeting of the League Council could be held. This could not be done and therefore Jinnah decided to hold the sessions of the League at

Calcutta. The Congress was also assembling there simultaneously. Announcing his decision on the 14th of November Mohammad Ali Jinnah said, " In conclusion, I would appeal to my Hindu friends, particularly the leaders of the Hindu community in whose statesmanship and judgment I have never lost faith, to be patient and not to be carried away by stray pronouncements here and there by individuals who may work themselves up into fury. We have got such individuals in both communities unfortunately. I am sure, with little patience and further efforts on both sides for a complete settlement between the two communities, our endeavours will be crowned with success, because it is only by bringing the two communities together that India can make further progress."

Towards the end of November the Council of the Bombay Provincial Muslim League rejected the provisions and recommendations of Nehru Report and occasioned the resignation of M. C. Chagla from the secretaryship of that body as he was against such decision. Jinnah did not commit himself to any of the points of view but said that a part could not be regarded as a whole and that the Central Council of the League would take decision on the merits of the Report. In December when the League assembled at Calcutta it was a compound of warring elements and Jinnah's position was not very

strong. The Central Khilafat Committee was also, at the time, meeting at Calcutta and its official group had decided to boycott the National Convention. It was a turning point in Muslim politics. But through the good offices of Jinnah and by dint of his remarkable talent of advocacy of his views and by his still tremendous influence on the public mind, Chagla's resolution in the League session was carried and a strong committee was formed in order to represent the Muslim point of view on the Convention under the leadership of Jinnah himself.

In what great contrast are these facts with what Sitaramayya writes in the *History of the Congress.* "A word now requires to be said," writes he, "about the All-Parties Conference itself. It became a sad failure; except the Muslims, the other minorities, one after another, deprecated communal representation. On the other hand, Mr. Jinnah who had just come from England and who had, ever since he arrived, been falling foul of the Nehru Report, began to oppose it. Some Muslims had even earlier evinced hostility to it." It is India's greatest misfortune that our contemporary Hindu writers, in their over-enthusiastic national catholicism, do not even wish to ascertain facts which might disprove the conclusion they wish to arrive at. And still the *History of the Congress* is a contribution to "national" literature!

The League Committee had formulated some suggestions, in the light of the Muslim Proposals, to be incorporated in the Draft Constitution of the Nehru Committee and had placed before the Sub-Committee appointed by the National Convention to meet the League delegates, in the form of amendments to the Nehru Report. The three main items of the amendments were: firstly, that Muslims should be given one-third representation on the Central Legislature; secondly, that the Punjab and Bengal should have Muslim representation on the population basis for ten years, subject to revision of this principle after that period; and, thirdly, that residuary powers should be vested in the provincial legislatures and not at the Centre. The Sub-Committee of the Convention rejected all of these proposals and thus torpedoed the very basis of the appointment of the Nehru Committee. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, however, put forward his amendments before the open session of the Convention on the 28th of December 1928. The debate that followed is of considerable importance and it is desirable that it should be dealt with in some detail.

"The Report of the Committee which you appointed has already been read out and placed before you," said Jinnah while moving his amendments on behalf of the All-India Muslim League. "I am exceedingly sorry that the Report of the Committee is neither help-

ful nor fruitful in any way whatsoever. I am sure, gentlemen, that you all realise that the present moment is very critical and vital to the interests not only of the Musalmans but to the whole of India. I think it will be recognised that it is absolutely essential to our progress that a Hindu-Muslim settlement should be reached, and that all communities should live in a friendly and harmonious spirit in this vast country of ours. No country has succeeded in either wresting a democratic constitution from the domination of another nation or establishing representative institutions from within without giving guarantees for the security of the minorities wherever such a problem has arisen. Majorities are apt to be oppressive and tyrannical and minorities always dread and fear that their interests and rights, unless clearly and definitely safeguarded by statutory provisions, would suffer and be prejudiced, but this apprehension is enhanced all the more when we have to deal with a communal majority. I am sure, you will, therefore, consider the present situation in which we are working and struggling for freedom and record your vote in favour of the modifications proposed, which, I have said before, are fair and reasonable and thus enable us to triumph in our cause.

"The first point that I want to place before you is a point with regard to our proposal that there should be no less than one-

third Muslim representation in the Central Legislature. We propose that one-third of the elected members of the Central Legislature should be Musalmans, and that the seats should be reserved for them to that extent in the joint electorates of the country. Now the Nehru Report has stated that according to the scheme which they have formulated, the Musalmans are likely to get one-third in the Central Legislature and more. It is argued there that the Punjab and Bengal will get many more seats over and above their proportion and the other minority provinces in India will get the representation of the Musalmans according to their population under the scheme propounded by the Nehru Report. What we feel is this. If it is conceded that Musalmans should be enabled to secure one-third of the representation in the Central Legislature, the method which is adopted is neither quite fair to the provinces where the Musalmans are in a minority, nor does it guarantee that we shall obtain one-third representation in the Central Legislature. Therefore the two Muslim Majority Provinces—Punjab and Bengal—will get more than their population which means you are giving more to the rich who will, under normal conditions, get the largest number of Muslim representations and you are depriving the Muslim Minority Provinces of great importance, and restricting them to get no more than the ratio of their population; whereas we wish to restrict the Punjab and Bengal

according to their population and desire that the excess should be distributed amongst the Muslim Minority Provinces. In other words, we propose that you let us carve out of this one-third as the Musalmans wish. Take the case of Madras and Bombay. It is not always the only criterion, *viz.*, counting of heads, but the importance of those two Provinces. Take the case of the United Provinces again; it is the centre of Musalman Culture and its heart, and it will be unfair that they should be restricted according to the number of their population in their representation in the Central Legislature. These three Provinces, Sind being separated, will then, so far as the population goes, be in this position: the United Provinces with the 14 per cent Musalmans, Bombay about 8 per cent and Madras about 6 or 7 per cent. The method that we want to be adopted is that the excess between one-third and one-fourth should be distributed amongst the other Provinces according to the relative position of their importance to the Musalmans and not according to population. I am sure indeed that, besides counting our heads, there are other weighty and important considerations, which must not be lost sight of. It is not only a question of getting votes in the Legislatures, but it is also essential that various parts of the Provinces which are themselves vast, should be represented, so that questions affecting the people for their grievances may be ventilated properly and thor-

oughly on the floor of the Legislature. Very often proper facts and arguments are placed by one single representative which, when they are convincing, sway the entire Legislature. It really comes to this that the Nehru Report makes a gift of the extra seats over and above the population basis to the Punjab and Bengal; whereas we propose that this extra seven or eight seats should be distributed amongst the Minority Muslim Provinces.

"Our next proposal is that in the event of the adult suffrage not being established, the Punjab and Bengal also should have seats reserved on population basis for the Musalmans. But they should not have the right to contest for more. Of course, subject to re-examination of the question at the end of ten years. I am not sure that establishment of adult suffrage is within the range of practical politics in the near future. You remember that originally the proposal emanated from certain Muslim leaders in March 1927, known as the Delhi Muslim Proposals. That was dealt with by the All-India Congress Committee in Bombay and in the open session of the Madras Congress and endorsed by them. The Muslim League in its Calcutta sessions in December, 1927 also confirmed the proposal. I am not going to enter into the pros and cons, but it is an admitted fact that although the Musalmans in the Punjab and Bengal are numerically

in the majority, their voting strength is far below in proportion to their population and they, therefore, would not secure sufficient representation, and it is feared that under these circumstances their representation will be far below their population. The device now is to meet this undoubted fact by the Nehru proposals, and the Report proposes the substitute of adult franchise, and from those premises it is argued that there is no need for reservation in the Punjab and Bengal; but we wish to provide for the contingency which is most patent and probable that in the event of the adult suffrage not being established there should be reservation for Musalmans in the Punjab and Bengal according to their population, but they should not be entitled to additional seats. And we, therefore, attach very great importance to this modification.

"Our next proposal is that the form of the constitution should be federal with residuary power vesting in the Provinces and clause 13-A in the Supplementary Nehru Report is most pernicious and should be deleted and the whole constitution should be revised on the basis of provincial governments having the residuary power vested in them, and subject to that, there should be revision of the schedules laying down Central and Provincial subjects as embodied in the Nehru Report. This question is by far the most important from the constitutional point of view and the

future development of India and has very little to do with the communal aspect. If this question is examined carefully, it has much less of communal bearing and far graver of general interest of India and the future constitutional progress of the people of India.

"This is hardly a place or an occasion when you would expect me to enter into a debate which might be held between two jurists. We have carefully considered the matter and we have come to the conclusion that a system which will give residuary power to the Provinces is the most suited for the Federation of India.

"With regard to the question of separation of Sind and the North-West Frontier Province, we cannot agree that they should wait until the Nehru Constitution is established with adult suffrage. Do you expect the Musalmans to oppose reforms being introduced in the N.-W. F. Province until the Nehru Constitution is an accomplished fact? Do you expect the Musalmans to refuse to accept the separation of Sind until the Nehru Constitution is established? I am somewhat amazed that the Committee appointed by the Convention has rejected these proposals on the ground that a resolution was passed at Lucknow which recorded an agreement arrived at by certain individuals who were parties to that agreement and signed it and therefore they

cannot reopen the question. The All-India Muslim League was not a party to any such resolution and was not represented at the meeting. I say with the utmost deference to the members of the Committee that this is not a valid ground or answer. There are many organisations present here in the Convention today; none of them is bound by any such agreements arrived at between individuals or groups. I venture to say that this Convention is not so bound, and it is wholly untenable to advance any such reason before this Convention. This Convention is entitled to make any change, or alteration or modification in the proposals now before it, and I ask the Convention whether the separation of Sind and the introduction of Reforms in the N.-W. F. Province are only to be accepted when the Nehru Constitution with adult suffrage is brought into full effect and operation in this country? The Musalmans feel that it is shelving the issue and postponing their insistent demand till doomsday and they cannot agree to it. I, therefore, appeal to the Convention to take all these matters into their careful consideration and meet us."

After this Sir Tej Bahadur rose to address the Convention and said that all those who were assembled there were actuated by one main desire, namely, to bring about the maximum amount of unity. Many parties which belonged to different schools of thought which

Province of Gujerat. May the soul of these great and devoted men who worked for the Empire and public cause rest in peace. And let us pray that we may soon have other such servants who may take their places and keep up their great traditions, and follow their noble examples and maintain the prestige and a great name of this mighty Empire.

INDIA'S SERVICES

Two questions above all are uppermost in our thoughts and are engrossing our minds at the present moment. The war and what is going to happen after the successful termination of this titanic struggle that has overshadowed the entire civilised world. India has stood faithful and loyal to the British Empire from the very commencement; she has poured out her treasure and shed the blood of some of her noblest sons on the battlefields of Flanders, Africa, Egypt and Mesopotamia for the defence of the Empire. It may be said once for all that the people of India are proud to be a part of the British Empire and that their loyalty is as true and firm as that of any other Britisher in any part of the Empire, not excluding Great Britain and there is no doubt that India will to the end stand faithfully by the British Empire. But she wishes no longer to continue as the subject race, or, to put in the

words of Lord Hardinge, "the trusty dependent", but claims to be an equal partner with the other members of the Empire.

It is a matter of great rejoicing that the enemy has failed in his efforts at Verdun. The gallant and noble defence of Verdun by the French people has won the admiration of the world: with this signal failure on the part of the enemy, the advent of Roumania and the mighty army that England has raised with ample munition, has enabled the Allies successfully to take the offensive in the West. The initiative is no longer with the enemy and the tide has turned, and let us hope that it will not be long before the arms of the Allies are finally successful, and this great war ends in complete defeat of the brutal and aggressive Prussian militarism.

We have met here today to consider the position of our country and Province. There are many questions and problems which require our most earnest and serious consideration. We have met to discuss those questions and exchange our views regarding those problems. Naturally on taking a general survey of the situation, one has to face the questions—What progress have we made within the past half a century? What is our present position? What is to be our future? What steps should be

He dwelt at length upon the remarks of Sir Tej in representing Jinnah and his friends as spoilt children and said it was likely "to give a wrong lead to the debate and also rest on a wrong foundation the claim advocated by Mr. Jinnah and his friends. I have also known Mr. Jinnah for the last sixteen years in close association as a colleague in nationalist life and I can assure you that he comes before us today neither as a naughty boy nor as a spoiled child but as fearless and lucid advocate of the small minority of Muslims whose claims he has put forward in the course of his speech. He has every right to be heard on the merits of his cause and I do hope you will not misjudge his claims by accepting the interpretation Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru has put on them.

"The main question before us is to consider how far Mr. Jinnah's claims are legitimate and necessary in the true interests of the country. How far have the Muslim interests, as safeguarded by the Nehru Committee Report, been secured and how far further concessions should be made to them as demanded by Mr. Jinnah. One important fact to remember in this con-

nection is that well-known Muslims like the esteemed patriots Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Dr. Ansari, Sir Ali Imam, Raja Sahib of Mahmudabad and Dr. Kitchlew have given their full assent to the compromise embodied in the Nehru Committee Report. It is further to be borne in mind that even in the Muslim League a large body of members have given their assent to the Nehru Committee Report. Mr. Jinnah, therefore, represents, if I may say so without offence, a small minority of Muslims. It is further to be noted that the Muslim community is not united in making this claim. A large bulk of them are with Sir Mohammad Shafi who is entirely opposed to joint electorates. Another considerable portion of our Muslim friends are with Mr. Fazal Ibrahim Rahimtoola and are holding an important session of a Conference over which no less a person than His Highness the Agha Khan presides. You will, therefore, please bear in mind that the demands, as set forth by Mr. Jinnah, do not proceed on behalf of the entire Muslim community, nor even a large bulk of it. Those considerations, therefore, of a statesmanlike or prudential character which might have weighed with you in agreeing to these concessions, if there was a prospect of winning over the entire Muslim community by your acceptance of Mr. Jinnah's proposals, are entirely absent in this case."

"A new Viceroy and a new Secretary of State are in office. From the date of Lord Morley's translation seven years ago to that of Mr. Austin Chamberlain's acceptance of the India Office last summer, Indian questions in the Commons have been dealt with by the Under-Secretary; and it is surely an anomaly and sometimes of a scandal that not once since his appointment has the House had an opportunity of hearing from Mr. Chamberlain a full statement upon the condition of India or an exposition of his policy. And yet as the whole Empire realises, the position of India in the Imperial system is deeply affected by the movement of events as it will be by every measure of after-war policy that may be decided by England and her Allies. Moreover, the internal life of India to day is undergoing changes more rapid than any hitherto known and the Government by deciding upon the publication of the Royal Commission's Report on the Public Services, has acknowledged the wisdom and necessity of discussion upon proposals for administrative reform. It is high time that Parliament began to take the affairs of India seriously and that the official myth that India wants nothing but to be let alone were exploded. If Parliament is to ignore the vast responsibility of the government of this mighty dependency, what is the use of a Parliament which calls itself Imperial?"

Ladies and gentlemen, is it not an anomaly that the domestic affairs of a country with a population of three hundred millions and more should practically be under the

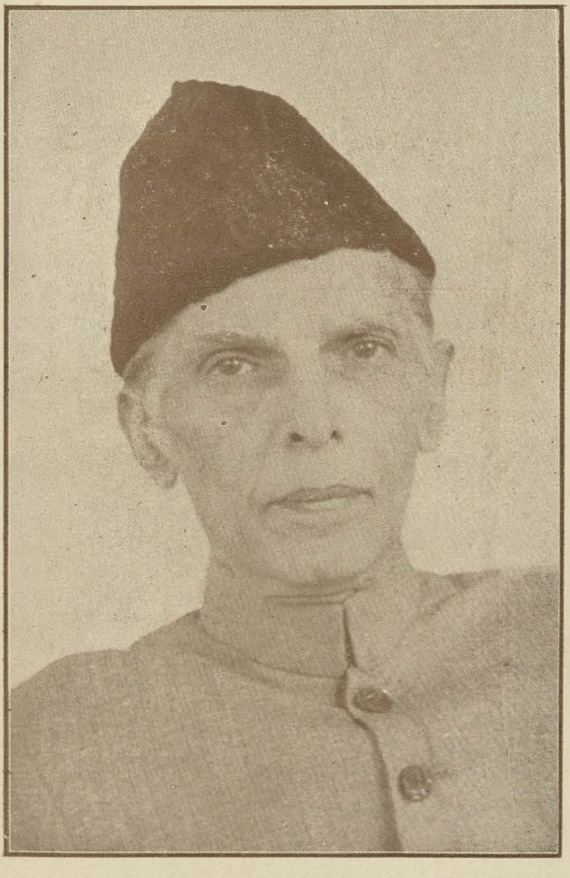
control and the management of (as it is often said by ministers and writers) an alien bureaucracy, not responsible to the people of the country, under no control of the people who pay taxation, but only accountable to the Secretary of State for India, who himself has never been to India, and his Council, which again is composed mostly of retired Civil Servants, sitting seven thousand miles away from India; and the Secretary of State again in his turn theoretically responsible to Parliament for his stewardship, though in practice hardly ever is his stewardship called to account or critically investigated by Parliament? Lord Courtney deprecated the position of the Secretary of State for India in the following words:

> "The Secretary of State is a member of the Cabinet, which must possess the confidence of the House of Commons. In the end, the national will must have its way here as elsewhere; but checks and obstacles are interposed which, perhaps, insensibly moderates its force. No part of the expense involved in the Government of India comes before the House of Commons in Committee Supply. The salary of the Colonial Secretary is voted by Parliament and there is thus a possibility of annually reviewing his policy in the full activity of the Parliamentary sessions. The salary of the Secretary of State for India is paid by India and never comes before the House of Commons. At the end of the session, generally after the Appropriation Bill is

acid test, on whether the minorities are in fact secure. Otherwise no proper constitution will last but result in revolution and civil war."

Jinnah pointed out that it was not correct to say that the Muslim League did not take part at all in the All-Parties Conference. The Council of the League, he said, had appointed a Committee in February 1928 and it attended the All-Parties Conference till the 11th of March and the Committee had express instructions not to proceed with the framing of any constitution until the Hindu-Muslim differences were adjusted and a compromise agreed upon. It was true that no settlement was reached, and as the Committee felt that it was not possible to arrive at any agreement they ceased to take further part in the All-Parties Conference which was responsible for producing the Nehru Report.

"I am not here today," continued Mohammad Ali Jinnah, "to express my opinion as to whether a constitution ought to be framed or not, but I would ask Mr. Jayakar to consider whether he wants what he calls the greatest common measure of agreement to be still greater or not. We are engaged today in a very serious and solemn transaction. It is merely for the



A GREAT PATRIOT

various organisations to come here and say, 'We agree to it,' and retire. We are here, as I understand, for the purpose of entering into a solemn contract and all parties who enter into it will have to work for it and fight for it together. What we want is that Hindus and Muslims should march together until our object is attained. Therefore it is essential that you must get not only the Muslim League but the Musalmans of India and here I am not speaking as a Musalman but as an Indian. And it is my desire to see that we get seven crores of Musalmans to march along with us in the struggle for freedom. Would you be content with a few ? Would you be content if I were to say, I am with you ? Do you want or do you not want the Muslim India to go along with you ? You must remember the two major communities in India—I say this without any slight to other communities like Sikhs, Christians, and Parsis—are the Hindus and Musalmans and naturally, therefore, these two communities have got to be reconciled and united and made to feel that their interests are common and they are marching together towards a common goal. I want you, therefore, to rise to that statesmanship which Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru describes. Minorities cannot give anything to the majority. It is, therefore, no use asking me not to press for what you call

'these small points.' I am not asking for these modifications because I am a 'naughty child.' If they are small points, why not concede? It is up to the majority, and majority alone can give. I am asking you for this adjustment because I think it is the best and fair to the Musalmans."

Jinnah then drew the attention of the Convention to the constitutional developments of Canada and Egypt. The minorities, he said, were always afraid of the majorities. The majorities, particularly religious majorities, were apt to be tyrannical and oppressive. The minorities therefore had a right to be absolutely secure. Was the adjustment between French Canadians and British arrived at on population basis or on the ground of pure equity, he asked. Was the adjustment between the Copts Christians and Musalmans in Egypt regulated by such considerations? It was a matter of politics and not of a court of law and therefore it was no use resorting to hair splitting and petty squabbles.

"These are big questions," said he, "and they can be settled by the exercise of the highest order of statesmanship and political wisdom. I, therefore, ask you once more to consider this question most carefully before you decide. Please

do not think that in anything that I have said I am threatening any party and I hope that I shall not be misunderstood. If you do not settle this question to-day, we shall have to settle it tomorrow, but in the meantime our national interests are bound to suffer. We are all sons of this land. We have to live together. We have to work together and whatever our differences may be, let us at any rate not create more bad blood. If we cannot agree, let us at any rate agree to differ, but let us part as friends. Believe me there is no progress for India until the Musalmans and Hindus are united, and let no logic, philosophy or squabble stand in the way of coming to a compromise and nothing will make me more happy than to see a Hindu-Muslim union."

The various amendments were then put to vote and were lost. This was the sad end of the National Convention and after a few days it was adjourned *sine die.* Jinnah returned to the League with a sad heart and after all that had transpired in the Convention it was impossible for him to conduct the League session which he adjourned to a later date.

In March 1929, the Report of the Nehru Committee came up for discussion in the Central Legislative Assembly and

Jinnah delivered a most pathetic piece of oration. He gave a detailed account of the events of the past years and explained how the Delhi Muslim Proposals initiated the discussions on the future constitutional problem of India and how the hand of friendship and compromise was offered by the Musalmans to Hindus. He explained the circumstances under which the Muslim Proposals were put forward and how the Madras sessions of the Indian Congress had welcomed them. Jinnah outlined the causes of the failure of the various All Parties and Unity Conferences and the eventual appointment of the Nehru Committee. But he was sadly disappointed by the recommendations of the Committee and characterised them as nothing but Hindu counter proposals which, he said, were against the letter and spirit of the Muslim proposals. In this way the question of the Nehru Report and with it the attempt of making an agreed constitution for India became a dead issue. The Hindu leaders maintained that Jinnah represented a small minority of Muslims and that the bulk of the Muslim population had accepted the Report. The nationalist press opened a volley of attacks and usual misrepresentations and vilifications followed.

The adjourned session of the All-India Muslim League met at the end of March 1929 at Delhi. It was now the turn of the League

to be divided within itself. A group of Muslims had already dissociated itself on the question of the boycott of Simon Commission and was led by Sir Mohammad Shafi. Another formed a separate Muslim Conference under the presidentship of His Highness the Agha Khan. The third separated itself on the question of the Delhi Muslim Proposals as it did not agree with the system of joint electorates and got a fillip when Mr. Jinnah's amendments to the Nehru Report were rejected by the National Convention. The fourth stood for unconditional support to Nehru Report and later in July 1929 formed itself into an All-India Nationalist Muslims Party with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad as president and T. A. K. Sherwani as secretary. Dr. Ansari joined this group and it was evidently the one on which the Hindu leaders were banking and they thought that Muslims in general stood behind them. The fifth group desired conciliation and harmony not only between the various schools of opinion among Muslims but also between Hindus and Musalmans, but would not lend their support to Nehru Report unconditionally. This last group was headed by Mohammad Ali Jinnah, who appealed to every Muslim to set aside his personal differences and invited him under the banner of the All-India Muslim League. During the course of his address, to the delegates of the League he remarked: "Are you or are you not going to

formulate your policy and programme as regards the future constitution of the Government of India? If you are going to shoulder any responsibility, if your decisions are going to command any weight, if you wish the will of Muslim India to be registered, then it can only be accomplished by a united decision." This session of the League was, therefore, faced with a crisis and its President, Mohammad Ali Jinnah, was seriously engaged in bringing about this settlement. In order to accommodate all the schools of thought, Jinnah had drafted a resolution for the purpose of placing it before the open session, containing "fourteen points" which subsequently became quite famous, associated with his name. The resolution ran thus:

"Whereas the basic idea on which the All-Parties Conference was called in being and a Convention summoned at Calcutta during Christmas week 1928, was that a scheme of reforms should be formulated and accepted and ratified by the foremost political organisations in the country as a National Pact; and whereas the Report was adopted by the Indian National Congress only constitutionally for the one year ending 31st December 1929, and in the event of the British Parliament not accepting it within the time limit, the Congress stands committed to the policy

and programme of complete independence by resort to civil disobedience and non-payment of taxes; and whereas the attitude taken up by the Hindu Mahasabha from the commencement through their representatives at the Convention was nothing short of an ultimatum, that, if a single word in the Nehru Report in respect of the communal settlement was changed they would immediately withdraw their support to it; and whereas the National Liberal Federation delegates at the Convention took up an attitude of benevolent neutrality, and subsequently, in their open session at Allahabad, adopted a non-committal policy, the Non-Brahmin and depressed classes are entirely opposed to it; and whereas the reasonable and moderate proposals put forward by the delegates of the All-India Muslim League at the Convention in modification were not accepted, the Muslim League is unable to accept the Nehru Report.

" The League after anxious and careful consideration, most earnestly and emphatically lays down that no scheme for the future constitution of the Government of India will be acceptable to Musalmans of India until and unless the following basic principles are given effect to and provisions are embodied therein to safeguard their rights and interests :—

"(1) The form of the future constitution should be federal with the residuary powers vested in the provinces.

"(2) A uniform measure of autonomy shall be granted to all provinces.

"(3) All legislatures in the country and other elected bodies shall be constituted on the definite principle of adequate and effective representation of minorities in every province without reducing the majority in any province to a minority or even equality.

"(4) In the Central Legislature, Musalman representation shall not be less than one-third.

"(5) Representation of communa groups shall continue to be by means of separate electorates as at present: provided it shall be open to any community, at any time, to abandon its separate electorate in favour of joint electorate.

"(6) Any territorial redistribution that might at any time be necessary shall not, in any way, affect the Muslim majority in the Punjab, Bengal and N.W.F. Province.

"(7) Full religious liberty, *i.e.*, liberty of belief, worship and observance, propa-

ganda, association and education, shall be guaranteed to all communities.

"(8) No bill or resolution or any part thereof shall be passed in any legislature or any other elected body if three-fourths of the members of any community in that particular body oppose such a bill, resolution or part thereof on the ground that it would be injurious to the interests of that community or in the alternative, such other method is devised as may be found feasible and practicable to deal with such cases.

"(9) Sind should be separated from the Bombay Presidency.

"(10) Reforms should be introduced in the N.W.F. Province and Baluchistan on the same footing as in other provinces.

"(11) Provision should be made in the constitution giving Muslims an adequate share along with the other Indians, in all the services of the State and in local self-governing bodies having due regard to the requirements of efficiency.

"(12) The constitution should embody adequate safeguards for the protection of Muslim culture and for the protection and promotion of Muslim educa-

tion, language, religion, personal laws and Muslim charitable institutions and for their due share in the grants-in-aid given by the State and by the self-governing bodies.

"(13) No cabinet, either Central or Provincial, should be formed without there being a proportion of at least one-third Muslim Ministers.

"(14) No change shall be made in the constitution by the Central Legislature except with the concurrence of the States constituting the Indian Federation."

The draft resolution also mentions an alternative to the above provision in the following terms:

"That, in the present circumstances, representation of Musalmans in the different legislatures of the country and other elected bodies through the separate electorates is inevitable and, further, the Government being pledged over and over again not to disturb this franchise so granted to the Muslim community since 1909 till such time as the Musalmans chose to abandon it, the Musalmans will not consent to joint electorates unless Sind is actually constituted into a separate province and reforms in fact are introduced in the N.W.F.

Province and Baluchistan on the same footing as in other provinces.

"Further, it is provided that there shall be reservation of seats according to the Muslim population in the various provinces; but where Musalmans are in a majority they shall not contest more seats than their population warrants.

"The question of excess representation of Musalmans over and above their population in provinces where they are in a minority is to be considered hereafter."

It was hoped that all the groups would accept the resolution and that complete harmony would once again prevail within the ranks of the League.

The resolution was referred to a Committee consisting of Jinnah, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Maulana Mohammad Ali, Malik Barkat Ali, Nawab Ismail Khan, Dr. Shafaat Ahmad Khan and Dr. Kitchlew.

An interesting account of this session of the Muslim League is given by Noman in his *Muslim India*. "Unfortunately, Mr. Jinnah's appeal and his efforts could not bring about any reconciliation. The open session of the League was due to meet in the morning. Mr. Jinnah was busy con-

ferring with the various representatives who had assembled for this purpose at Hakeem Ajmal Khan's residence. The supporters of the Nehru Report who were sent to the League for the sole purpose of getting the Nehru Report accepted, in their enthusiasm did not wait for Mr. Jinnah and proposed Dr. Mohammad Alam to take the chair. This was the signal for scenes of disturbance. The audience rose almost to a man and a number of them waived their hands and sticks to show that they did not want Dr. Alam as president. Dr. Alam, however, in this pandemonium, called Mr. Abdul Rahman Ghazi to move his main resolution which he did amidst shouts and yells without speech, and Mr. T. A. K. Sherwani seconded without speech, and soon after this Dr. Mohammad Alam was heard declaring it passed and dissolved the session. Just at this moment Mr. Jinnah returned and once again pindrop silence prevailed. Mr. Jinnah decided to adjourn this session and thus averted a great trouble.

A word now requires to be said on the part that Gandhi played in regard to the Nehru Report. At the impending failure of the National Convention and after Jinnah's amendments had been rejected, Gandhi appeared on the scene and remarked: "Whilst we have very nearly exhausted the Nehru Report and accepted

it without much alteration yet much still remains to be done. The situation in the country is such that we shall have to keep both the Nehru Committee and the Convention alive. As regards the Muslim question the Convention has not been able to placate all parties. The Sikhs also require to be placated. Personally I think we have not done full justice to the Sikhs." The Convention then at the instance of Gandhi adopted the following resolution: "This Convention is of opinion that the resolutions it has already passed on the recommendations of the All-Parties Committee contained in clauses 1 to 6 of their Report sufficiently indicate the will of the nation as to the nature and main principles of the constitution acceptable to it and is further of opinion that except on points on which notes of dissent have been recorded at the instance of some of the parties present, there is a general agreement on the basis of the solution of communal problem recommended by the said committee. This Convention adjourns *sine die* to meet when necessary for completing its work."

And what the "will of the nation" was according to Gandhi, is probably indicated by the resolution of the National Congress, the authorship of which also stands to his credit. The National Con-

gress in right royal fashion thought it fit to proceed to recommend the Nehru Report in its entirety, to the British Parliament in the teeth of opposition from the minorities whom it adversely affected. And if the British Parliament failed to abide by the "national will" to enforce the constitution before the 31st of December 1929, a campaign of non-violent non-co-operation was kept in store for them. While moving his resolution before the Congress, Gandhi said: "I suggest to you that the purpose of every Congressman should be to adopt the Nehru Report in the same spirit in which it was received by the whole of India at the time it was published. Let me recall to you the fact that at the time of its publication it was not only enthusiastically received by the whole nation but it commanded, it extorted, unstinted admiration of our critics, of our opponents and of outsiders who were disinterested...........You cannot take this Report piecemeal. It is an organic whole........ As Dr. Ansari has pointed out, if you attack the central theme of the Report you stab the heart itself and the central theme is what is known as Dominion Status. I suggest to you that it will be a grievous blunder to pit Independence against Dominion Status and compare the two and suggest that Dominion Status carries humiliation with it and that Independence is

something that is triumphant."

Thus in the midst of the subtle sentiment of mountebank nationalism not only the vital rights and interests of millions of Musalmans were thrown to the wolves but also the much-coveted ideal of independence evaporated in the air.

CHAPTER XVIII

ROUND TABLE CONFERENCE

The year 1929 proved a busy and memorable period for India. The Central Committee consisting of four members of the Council of State elected to it and five members of the Assembly nominated by the Government of India under the presidentship of Sir Sankaran Nair was touring India along with the Simon Commission. The Indian States Committee under the chairmanship of Sir Harcourt Butler presented its report in April 1929. The Hartog Committee was also touring the country in order to review the growth of education in British India and was expected to present its report in September. The Simon Commission concluded their work by April 1929 but before they could submit their report to Parliament, the Conservative Government in England was replaced by the Labour Ministry as a result of the general elections in May 1929 with Mr. MacDonald as the Prime Minister and Col. Wedgwood Benn as the Secretary of State for India.

The Calcutta Congress had asked the British Government to accept the Nehru Report in its entirety, and pending the expected

negotiations between Gandhi and the Government it had accepted the social programme outlined by him. There were two planks of this programme—the removal of untouchability and boycott of foreign cloth. The work was taken up by the Committees appointed by the Congress in this regard and a vigorous campaign was launched. The movement undoubtedly strengthened the Hindus and consequently the Congress, as in the first instance it brought within the fold of Hindudom the bulk of millions of untouchables (although for the time being) who were trying to assert themselves as a separate entity; and secondly, it benefited the millowners who were practically all Hindus and won their unstinted support for the Congress. These movements had a twofold effect. In India, although the high-caste Hindus were against the principle of abolition of untouchability and were not diposed to throw open the gates of their temples to the Depressed Classes, the bulk of the Hindu population professed to throw in their lot with Gandhi and this movement brought increased popularity to his credit. In England it served to mobilise public opinion in his favour and brought him increased importance.

In June Lord Irwin had taken four months' leave and proceeded to England in order to " devise some means whereby

the constitutional question might be clarified, and a greater degree of co-operation obtained from all sections of Indian political opinion before Parliament was asked to pronounce upon whatever scheme of Reforms might be laid before it as a result of the Statutory enquiry." Mohammad Ali Jinnah seized the opportunity. He thought that at this juncture he could, on his own, press forward India's claim for constitutional reforms and addressed the following letter to the Prime Minister of England.

June 19, 1929.

Dear Mr. MacDonald,

I think you will remember our conversation in July last while I was in London. In view of what you said to me then and the great kindness with which you treated me I am encouraged to feel that I must place before you the situation as it presents itself to me. In the solution and settlement of this question vital interests of Great Britain and India are involved which I think you appreciate and understand more than anybody else as you possess personal knowledge of India during the time you were on the Islington Commission. But much water has run down the Thames and the Ganges since then. The present position is a very serious deadlock and if allowed to continue it will, in my judgment, prove disastrous both to

the interests of India and Great Britain.

The Simon Commission was boycotted by political India, of which there can be very little doubt. The exclusion of Indians from the personnel of the Commission from start to finish relegated the Indians to the position of suppliants and assessors, and let me tell you, whatever you may hear to the contrary, you will never get political India to co-operate with the scheme further if the various stages of the scheme are adhered to strictly. But the task of the Simon Commission, as it was repeatedly declared by responsible men and the press in England, was that of a 'rapporteur'.

So far as India is concerned, we have done with it and when its report, whatever it may be, is published in due course, every effort will be made in India to damn it. Of course, this is on the assumption that it will not be satisfactory, which is already assumed in India. After the publication of the report, if the programme and the plan of the scheme of the Commission as announced are adhered to, as I understand it will be, His Majesty's Government will wait until they get the considered opinion of the Government of India on that report and after that they will formulate their definite proposals and place them before Parliament to be referred to the Joint Parliamentary Committee

without the House definitely committing itself with regard to those proposals of His Majesty's Government; and that at this stage the Indian representatives will be given the opportunity to place their views before the Joint Parliamentary Committee. What chance of success is there in their efforts to get at that stage any modifications of a substantial character at the hands of the Joint Parliamentary Committee?

It strikes me, and I think you will agree, that in the normal course there will be no chance of getting the Joint Parliamentary Committee to make any radical change, and my reasons are as follows:

The Joint Parliamentary Committee will be in this position. They will have, in the first instance, before them the recommendations of the Simon Commission; secondly, the views and the proposals of the Government of India, which I assume will be reactionary—and that is the opinion and feeling in India—and with these materials before them the definite proposals which will be formulated by His Majesty's Government will be referred to the Joint Parliamentary Committee. I should have thought that at that stage so far as the principles underlying the proposals are concerned we shall stand not only precluded but barred from suggesting any modification of the fundamental principles of the

proposals as referred to the Joint Parliamentary Committee by the House, and all that can at that stage be done reasonably and with any success would be to discuss and, if possible, to modify the details of these proposals. If that is all the advantage that is still open to the Indian representatives, can you conceive that political India having boycotted the Simon Commission and the scheme at the stage of enquiry and investigations could now be induced to co-operate directly or indirectly with the further stages of the scheme when, as I have pointed out, no real useful purpose would be served?

India has lost her faith in the word of Great Britain. The first and foremost thing that I would ask you to consider is how best to restore that faith and revive the confidence of India in the 'bona fides' of Great Britain. His Excellency the Viceroy, Lord Irwin, addressing the Legislature on the 28th January, 1929, attempted to perform this task. This is what he says:

'But I tell this Assembly again, and through them India, that the declaration of 1917 stands and will stand for all time as the solemn pledge of the British people to do all that can be done by one people to assist another to attain full national political stature, and the pledge so given will

never be dishonoured. And as actions are commonly held more powerful than words, I will add that I should not be standing before you here today as Governor-General if I believed that the British people had withdrawn their hand from that solemn covenant. Those, therefore, who preach that a new generation has arisen in England which seeks to explain away the significance of the 1917 declaration are, consciously or unconsciously but none the less really misrepresenting the purpose of Great Britain and poisoning the wells by which the common life of India and Great Britain is supported and sustained.'

You will notice from this quotation that I am not singular in my opinion that India is fast losing her faith in Great Britain. The reason again for this is not far to seek. In 1924 in the course of an important debate in the Legislative Assembly on a resolution urging the Government to take steps to review the Government of India Act with a view to establishing full responsible Government in India, Sir Malcolm Hailey, in the course of his speech on behalf of the Government of India, in effect, repudiated that the Declaration of 1917 and the preamble to the Government of India Act means that Great Britain was committed to the policy of granting full Self-governing Dominion Status to India. He said: 'The pronouncement of August 1917 spoke of the

gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible Government in India. That is also the term used in the preamble to the Act; that is the term used in the Royal Warrant of Instructions which adds that "thus will India be fitted to take her place among the other Dominions". The term has its significance. We know that it was deliberately chosen. The Congress and the League had asked the Imperial Government to proclaim its intention to confer self-government on India at an early date and the Cabinet chose the present term. The expression used in the Act is a term of precision, conveying that the Executive in India would be responsible to the Indian Legislature instead of to the British Parliament. If you analyse the term "full dominion self-government" you will see that it is of somewhat wider extent conveying that not only will the Executive be responsible to the Legislature but the Legislature will in itself have the full powers which are typical of the modern Dominion. It may be there is some difference of substance because responsible Government is not necessarily incompatible with a legislature with limited or restricted powers. It may be that full Dominion Self-Government is the logical outcome of responsible Government, nay, it may be the inevitable and historical development of responsible Government, but it is a further and a final step.'

Further, you know in the recent publication of the memoirs of Lord Curzon, I think, it was discovered that there was some difference of opinion as to the significance of the words which were finally adopted in the declaration of August 1917 between Lord Curzon and Mr. Montagu. Along with this the policy of the Government of India and His Majesty's Government since 1924 in turning a deaf ear to all reasonable demands has led almost every political party to come to the conclusion that there is no hope of getting any fairplay and thus there is a section in India that has already declared in favour of complete independence, and I may tell you without exaggeration that the movement for independence is gaining ground, as it is supported by the Indian National Congress.

This being a short summary of the position, I would most earnestly urge upon you at this moment to persuade His Majesty's Government without delay to make a declaration that Great Britain is unequivocally pledged to the policy of granting to India full responsible Government with Dominion status. The effect of such a declaration will be very far-reaching and go a great way to create a different atmosphere in the country and will be a very severe antidote to the movement for independence. But, here again, I must admit, in the words of the Viceroy, that we must not forget

that actions are held more powerful than words. Naturally, therefore, the next question that presents itself to all thinking men is what action or actions should be taken, and may I quote again from the same speech of Lord Irwin. This is what he says:

'It would seem evident, however, that what all people must desire is a solution reached by mutual agreement between Great Britain and India, and that, in the present circumstances, the friendly collaboration of Great Britain and India is a requisite and indispensable condition to obtain it. On the one side it is as unprofitable to deny the right to Parliament to form its free and deliberate judgment on the problems as it would be short-sighted of Parliament to underrate the importance of trying to reach a solution which might carry the willing assent of political India.'

May I suggest a solution, which I think would most probably be acceptable to India. His Majesty's Government before they formulate their proposals and after they are in receipt of the Simon Commission Report and the views of the Government of India, and so, before they formulate their proposals, should invite representatives of India, who would be in a position to deliver the goods, (because completely unanimous opinion in India is not possible at present), to sit in conference with them with a view to

reaching a solution which might carry, to use the words of the Viceroy, the 'willing assent of the political India.' If such an invitation comes directly from the Prime Minister on behalf of His Majesty's Government, I feel that it will be irresistible, and if such a conference is held with men who are in the front and the foremost rank of political India, I am not unhopeful that a solution may be reached satisfactory to Great Britain and India.

Will you, therefore, consider these proposals of mine with the care and attention that you can give them. In short it comes to this (1) declaration of policy, (2) followed up with an invitation from His Majesty's Government with a view to arriving at an agreement as to the future constitution of India before His Majesty's Government formulate any definite proposals and place them before Parliament. His Majesty's Government will be, as I have said before, armed already with the Simon Report and the Government of India dispatch on it, both of them, I assume, will not be satisfactory.

As to the personnel of the representatives of India to be invited you may well ask me by what method are we to get them. I have very carefully considered the pros and cons and I have come to the conclusion that if we are to elect our representatives in the Assembly and confine ourselves to

the members of the Assembly, there are men outside the Assembly whose presence would be indispensable for a conference of the kind I am contemplating. On the other hand, if it is thrown open to non-members, it might lead to a great deal of canvassing and rivalry and we may not get the personnel we may desire. I think you yourself are fairly well acquainted with the names of prominent political leaders in India. But besides that His Excellency the Viceroy, I think, by now knows pretty well who is who in the political world of India and further the members of the Government of India would be able to guide you, if necessary. But you must take upon yourself to invite such men as you may be advised to go over to London and confer with His Majesty's Government and sit in conference with the Cabinet. Of course, the number should be, as far as possible, not very large. I should restrict the number to about fifteen.

This shortly is the scheme which I would put before you, and I have no doubt that you will give your most earnest consideration to it.

With best wishes:

Yours sincerely,

(Sd.) M. A. Jinnah.

After this letter Mohammad Ali Jinnah awaited eagerly the result of his communication and politics remained for him a game only of "wait and see". He, however, busied himself once again with the constructive legislation and lent his support to the principles underlying Child Marriage Bill (popularly known as Sarda Bill) and opposed Hunger Strikers' Bill and Public Safety Bill.

Lord Irwin came back to India in October and on the 31st issued the declaration for which Jinnah was waiting eagerly and for which he had appealed to the Prime Minister of England. The Viceroy's announcement ran thus :

> "*The goal of British policy was stated in the declaration of August* 1917 *to be that of providing for the 'gradual development of self-governing institutions with a view to the progressive realisation of responsible Government in India as an integral part of the British Empire'. As I recently pointed out, my own instrument of instruction from the King-Emperor expressly states that it is His Majesty's will and pleasure that the plans laid by Parliament in* 1919 *should be the means by which British India may attain its due place among his Dominions.*

Ministers of the Crown, moreover, have more than once publicly declared that it is the desire of the British Government that India should in the fullness of time take her place in the Empire in equal partnership with the Dominions, but in view of the doubts which have been expressed both in Great Britain and India regarding the interpretation to be placed on the intentions of the British Government in enacting the Statute of 1919, I am authorised on behalf of His Majesty's Government to state clearly that in their judgment it is implicit in the declaration of 1917 that the natural issue of India's constitutional progress, as there contemplated, is the statement of Dominion status."

The declaration further referred to Sir John Simon's letter to the Premier in which Sir John suggested "that what might be required, after the reports of the Statutory Commission and the Indian Central Committee have been made, considered and published but before the stage is reached, of the Joint Parliamentary Committee, would be the setting up of a conference in which His Majesty's Government should meet representatives both of British India and of the States for the purpose of seeking the greatest possible

measure of agreement for the final proposals which it would later be the duty of His Majesty's Government to submit to Parliament." The statement continued: "When, therefore, the Commission and the Indian Central Committee have submitted their reports, and these have been published, and when His Majesty's Government have been able in consultation with the Government of India to consider these matters in the light of all the material then available, they will propose to invite representatives of different parties and interests in British India and representatives of the Indian States to meet them separately or together as circumstances may demand for the purpose of the conference and discussion in regard both to the British Indian and the All-Indian problems. It will be their earnest hope that, by this means, it may subsequently prove possible on these grave issues to submit proposals to Parliament which may command a wide measure of general assent. It is not necessary for me to say how greatly I trust that the action of His Majesty's Government may evoke response from, and enlist the concurrence of, all sections of opinion in India, and I believe that all who wish India well, wherever and whoever they are, desire to break through the webs of mistrust that have lately clogged the relations between India

and Great Britain. I am firmly assured that course of action now proposed is the method by which we may best hope to handle those high matters in the way of constructive statesmanship."

Lord Irwin's declaration created a stir among India's political ranks, and immediately our leaders proceeded to examine it. The Congress leaders and a few of their sympathisers gathered at Delhi at the invitation of Motilal Nehru. At Bombay those belonging to the school of thought of Mohammad Ali Jinnah assembled in the chamber of Sir Chimanlal Setalvad and issued a press statement. "We have," said the statement, "carefully considered the statement issued by the Viceroy on behalf of His Majesty's Government and we are of opinion that the declaration that the natural issue of Indian constitutional progress is the attainment of Dominion Status is satisfactory. We appreciate the fundamental change of procedure whereby the representatives of India will be invited to meet His Majesty's Government in conference for the purpose of arriving at the greatest possible measure of agreement regarding the proposals to be submitted to Parliament for the attainment of Dominion Status by India and thereby reaching a solution which might carry the willing assent of political India. We trust

that the representatives of India who will be invited to meet His Majesty's Government will be such as will command the confidence of the people of India."

The statement was signed by Sir Chimanlal Setalvad, M. A. Jinnah, M. R. Jayakar, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, L. R. Tairsee, Bhulabhai J. Desai, Balubhai T. Desai, Sir Chunilal Mehta, H. P. Mody, Ratansi D. Morarji, M. C. Chagla, K. M. Munshi, Lalji Narang, Huseinbhoy A. Laljee, D. G. Dalvi, Jamnadas Dwarkadas, Kanji Dwarkadas and Sir Purshotamdas Thakurdas.

Delhi leaders almost with culpable haste issued a manifesto laying down certain conditions precedent to any co-operation even for the framing of a constitution for India for which purpose the conference was being called. The conditions were:

(1) All discussions at the proposed Conference to be on the basis of full Dominion Status for India.

(2) There should be predominant representation of Congressmen at the Conference.

(3) A general amnesty of political prisoners.

(4) The Government of India to be carried on from now onwards, as far as is possible under existing conditions, on the lines of a Dominion government.

Apart from the reasonableness of these conditions of which the second was most extraordinary, especially in view of the Muslim position in the Congress, the remarks of Jawaharlal Nehru in this regard are noteworthy. "The Congress people," says he in his *Autobiography*, "considered them to be essential, the *sine qua non*, without which there could be no co-operation. For them they represented the minimum required. This was made clear by a subsequent meeting of the Congress Working Committee, which further stated that this offer was limited to the date of the next Congress. For the Moderate groups they were a desirable maximum which should be stated, but which could not be insisted on to the point of refusal of co-operation. For them the conditions, though called vital, were not really conditions. And so it happened that later on, though none of these conditions were satisfied and most of us lay in gaol, together with scores of thousands of others, our Moderate and Responsivist friends, who had signed that manifesto with us, gave their full co-operation to our gaolers. Most of us suspected that this would happen—

though hardly to the extent it did happen—but there was some hope that this joint action, whereby the Congress people had to some extent curb themselves, would also result in curbing the propensities of the Liberals and others to indiscriminate and almost invariable co-operation with the British Government. A more powerful motive for some of us, who heartily disliked the compromising resolution, was to keep our own Congress ranks well knit together. On the eve of a big struggle we could not afford to split up the Congress. It was well known that Government was not likely to accept the conditions laid down by us, and our position would thus be stronger and we could easily carry our Right Wing with us."

Gandhi himself subscribed to the terms of the manifesto and defended it with all the power of his pen against those who criticised it to be a negation of the Calcutta Congress resolution.

Mohammad Ali Jinnah had seen the absurdity of such an attitude from very beginning and wrote to Motilal Nehru that the principle of the Round Table Conference should be accepted and details outlined in the Delhi manifesto could be adjusted later, particularly in view of the bitter criticism by the House of Lords of

the progressive policy of the Labour Government regarding India. It was, in his opinion, foolish to stick to such demands and lay down such stipulations and precipitate matters. In addition to this a number of India's English friends and well-wishers were communicating with Indian leaders appealing to them not to reject the hand of friendship offered by Mr. MacDonald's Party. Lord Irwin was himself very anxious for co-operation on this point and had wished to meet Indian leaders personally. On the 12th of December Jinnah and Patel, the then President of the Assembly, went together to Sabarmati in order to convince Gandhi that his stand was harmful to the larger interests of India. Eventually on the 23rd Jinnah, Patel, Gandhi, Motilal Nehru and a few others met the Viceroy, who while coming to Delhi, had in the morning narrowly escaped from a bomb attack on his life. Perfect cordiality prevailed throughout the interview, and His Excellency was willing to meet the leaders' demand of amnesty for political prisoners. But Gandhi wished to pin him down to the question of Dominion Status, but the Viceroy said he was not in a position to discuss beyond the implications of his proclamation. The talks, therefore, failed, and no compromise could be arrived at.

The question was, however, finally to be thrashed out by the next session of the Congress at Lahore on the 31st of December, which marked the end of the period given to British Parliament for the acceptance of the Nehru Report and a programme of "national offensive" was in the offing. The Congress met under the presidentship of Jawaharlal Nehru and declared "the entire scheme of the Nehru Committee Report to have lapsed." Complete Independence was once again adopted as a creed and the All-India Congress Committee was authorised, "whenever it deems fit, to launch upon a programme of Civil Disobedience including non-payment of taxes, whether in selected areas or otherwise, and under such safeguards as it may consider necessary."

The decision of the Lahore Congress came as a rude shock to all those who had hoped for a peaceful negotiation for India's political uplift. The Viceroy had warned the Congress leaders that the Government of India intended to deal with subversive activities very severely and in February 1930, while addressing a Durbar at Lucknow had dwelt at length upon the "sinister possibilities of Civil Disobedience". Jinnah also was disappointed with the Congress decision and believed that it was calculated to do enormous harm to

the interests of India. He was of the opinion that Gandhi's influence over the Congress was responsible for this sudden outburst of political hysteria, and said that the Hindu leader was "mentally and constitutionally incapable of learning and unlearning things" and that his "Himalayan miscalculation" in the past had failed to open his eyes to realities. He advocated that India should make use of the opportunity for what it was worth and threw in all his weight at the Council of the All-India Muslim League which met in February. The League Council consequently welcomed Viceroy's declaration.

With the Lahore Congress, Gandhi virtually emerged as full dictator of Congress affairs. The following extracts from his writings at this time amply show the working of his mind:

"The threat of dire vengeance uttered against civil and criminal resisters is idle and therefore uncalled for. There is this in common between both. Both have counted the cost. They are out for suffering. Would that their means were also common! Unfortunately, instead of being complementary, they neutralise each other. I know that the non-violent revolutionary like me impedes the progress of the violent revolutionary. I wish the latter would

realise that he impedes my progress more than I do his, and that, being a Mahatma, if left unhampered by him, I am likely to make greater progress than he can ever hope to make. Let him realise too that he has never yet given me a fair chance. Some of them no doubt have been most considerate. I want full suspension of his activity. If it will please him, I am free to admit that I dread him more than I dread Lord Irwin's wrath."

"I must admit my many inconsistencies. But since I am called 'Mahatma' I might well endorse Emerson's saying that 'foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds'. There is, I fancy, a method in my inconsistencies, as in nature there is a unity running through seeming diversity . . . As for my leadership, if I have it, it has not come for any seeking, it is a fruit of faithful service. A man can as little discard such leadership as he can the colour of his skin. And since I have become an integral part of the nation, it has to keep me with all my faults and shortcomings, of some of which I am painfully conscious and of many others of which candid critics, thanks be to them, never fail to remind me. Of this, however, I am certain, that if they and those who would never criticise me will have the patience to under-

stand my programme and have the steadfastness to follow it, Purna Swaraj is near."

In February the Congress Working Committee decided to launch the Civil Disobedience movement, and in March Gandhi gave an ultimatum to the Viceroy that unless within seven days His Excellency was willing to meet his eleven points he would advise the country to begin a programme of civil resistance. Consequently the famous Dandi march was undertaken by Gandhi and his "Pandacharees". The movement was intended to be a "fight to a finish", and innumerable high sounding slogans were raised to excite and attract the public. In April next, however, Gandhi began to feel uncomfortable about the whole affair and by the end of the month he said, "the present campaign is not designed to establish independence but to arm the people with the power to do so." On the 5th of May he was arrested.

In the meantime the attitude of caste Hindus had at several places demonstrated that Gandhi's programme of retaining untouchables as Hindus without the abolition of caste, was not to proceed unopposed, and an anti-priestcraft movement was started by a few enthusiastic social zealots. The depressed classes, however, realising

the vital issues that faced them once again began to assert themselves and later in August formed themselves into a conference at Nagpur under Dr. B. R. Ambedkar.

At Delhi an All-Parties Conference was called by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru to discuss the various aspects of the Indian political situation with special regard to the Round Table Conference and Hindu Muslim question, but nothing substantial came out of it. A Muslim Conference met under the presidentship of Maulvi Mohammad Yakub and during the course of his address he characterised Gandhi's movement as a movement against the interests of the minorities. Dr. Mahmud, a member of the Congress Working Committee, telegraphed to Gandhi asking him whether he would agree to the North-West Frontier Province to have the same status as that of other provinces in the future scheme of constitution of India, and if so, he said, the Frontier Province was willing to join Gandhi in his movement, but as far as the public information is concerned no reply was received by him until the Congress organisation had been declared unlawful and Dr. Mahmud in the ordinary course was also arrested and imprisoned. Later, however, the "nationalist Muslims" and members of the newly-formed Jamiat-ul-Ulema came forward with a powerful campaign

of influence and propaganda and they swamped the Muslim province. All these facts go a long way to show as to how things were moving at the time and through what stages India in general and Musalmans in particular were passing.

After the arrest of Gandhi a special representative of the *Daily Herald*, George Slocombe, came out to India to collect first-hand information and interviewed Gandhi in Yeravada Prison. Gandhi's statement, which Mr. Slocombe afterwards released for local publication, shows the views Gandhi held at the time about the much coveted goal of independence. "Once India is free", wrote the newspaperman, "Britain, I suspect, will have no warmer friend than Mr. Gandhi. Place India as a free unit within the British Commonwealth and Mr. Gandhi will become a British hero as he already is an Indian hero." Slocombe asked Gandhi as to what he thought of independence. Did he demand independence as ultimately implied in Dominion Status? or did he insist on separation from the British Commonwealth? "I have always heard", said Gandhi, "that in England Dominion Status is understood to mean independence, but by the Indian authorities it is not so understood. Therefore when independence is resisted by them in contradistinction to Dominion

Status we naturally ask for independence." When Slocombe asked Gandhi if he thought that Canada and South Africa were not in all essential respects independent, he acknowledged they were. "But," said he, "we are not offered a status like theirs." Gandhi, wrote Slocombe, was prepared to "suspend Civil Disobedience and advise co-operation with the Round Table Conference provided the terms of reference of the Round Table Conference included the framing of a constitution giving India "the substance of independence."

Gandhi had already qualified the word Swaraj with a prefix "Purna" in order that he could interpret it in his own way in whatever manner it suited him. In this way India's fate and her final goal was made to dangle in the air and it became impossible for the common man to understand to what end Gandhi wanted to ake India.

Soon after the Simon Commission's report was published, the Viceroy made a statement before a joint session of the two Houses of the Central Legislature in which he referred to the status of Indian representatives at the Round Table Conference and the scope of its discussions, making it clear that it was not going to be a conference merely for the sake of

academic discussion, but that His Majesty's Government intended to pay every attention to the views of all the delegates that would attend it. Jinnah along with other leaders of his group felt that this assurance was satisfactory and with full optimism they sailed for England to attend the Conference.

The proceedings of this first Round Table Conference, which met on the 12th of November, 1930, are available in detail and need not be reproduced here. The important part that Mohammad Ali Jinnah played and the contribution that he made to it, and indeed to all its subsequent sessions, are fairly well known. One cable, however, that was published in the *Bombay Chronicle*, dated 15th November, 1930, is noteworthy. "I understand," wrote the special correspondent of that newspaper, "that Muslims were willing to accept joint electorates and reservation of seats on the population basis upon making as separate province Sind and North-West Frontier Province. Other communal demands not insisted upon by Muslims under the leadership of His Highness the Agha Khan and Mr. Jinnah who are willing to unite in the demand of Dominion Status at the Conference, if Muslims are granted above terms. All Hindus except the Mahasabhaites are agreeable. Jayakar's

attitude is rendering impossible a united Indian offensive which is much regretted. Jayakar's persistence in forcing the small communal issue is endangering Indian unity in the political demand in which Liberals and Muslims have agreed not to work the constitution if Dominion Status is not granted."

Jawaharlal Nehru's remarks regarding the delegates of this Conference calling them reactionaries and representatives only of vested interests were hardly befitting a man of his responsibilities and public eminence specially in view of the fact that these very men had at that time probably contributed more to India's welfare than what he himself had done. Patriotism is a virtue which is not necessarily restricted to the members of the Indian National Congress, and such remarks were calculated to do more harm than good at that time.

CHAPTER XIX

CONSTITUTIONAL ADVANCE

In February 1930, Mohammad Ali Jinnah had succeeded in uniting the various groups of Musalmans under the League, mention of which has been made in the preceding pages. The nationalist Muslims, however, separated themselves for good and joined Gandhi's movement. Most of the Muslim leaders after the sad breakdown of negotiations on the communal question and the abrupt ending of the National Convention, were suspicious of the Civil Disobedience move started by the Congress under the sole leadership of Gandhi, and the Muslim Conference under Maulvi Mohammad Yakub had already given vent to this feeling. In the past, the communal question had been tackled from different angles and attempts were made to draft a constitution which could be acceptable to all concerned. But all had proved abortive. Lala Lajpat Rai and Maulana Hasrat Mohani had given their due consideration to this all-important aspect of Indian politics and had initiated thinking in a different direction.

In December 1930 the All-India Muslim League met at Allahabad in its plenary sessions

under Allama Iqbal (the famous poet, Sir Muhammad Iqbal) who had also been, for some time past, anxiously studying the possibilities of a communal settlement. The moment was opportune for him and during the course of his presidential address he put forward before India a principle which in his opinion could solve the communal problem once for all. It must, however, be remembered that although the idea originally emanated from Lala Lajpat Rai, Iqbal gave it a shape, expressed it from an authoritative Muslim platform and brought arguments in its favour from the Muslim point of view. " To base a constitution," said he, " on the conception of a homogeneous India or to apply to India the principles dictated by British democratic sentiments is unwittingly to prepare her for a civil war. "

Iqbal said that the national idea was " racialising " the outlook of Muslims and thus materially counteracting the humanising work of Islam. The construction of a policy on " national " lines, if it meant displacement of Islamic principles of solidarity, was simply unthinkable to a Muslim. The unity of the Indian nation, therefore, must be sought not in the negation but in mutual harmony and co-operation of the many. He was pained that the attempts of the Indian leaders to discover such a principle of internal harmony had failed so far. He asked : " Why have they failed ? Perhaps we suspect each other's inten-



Qaed-e-Azam
Addressing the Womanhood of the Nation

tions and inwardly aim at dominating each other." He, for his part, held that events seem to be tending in the direction of mutual harmony. He had no hesitation in declaring that if the principle that the Indian Muslim was entitled to full and free development on the lines of his own culture and tradition in his own Indian homelands was recognised as the basis of a permanent communal settlement, he would be ready to stake his all for the freedom of India.

To achieve this idea Iqbal believed that communalism in its higher aspects was indispensable to the formation of a harmonious whole in a country like India. The Muslim demand for the creation of Muslim India within India was perfectly justified. He wanted to see the Punjab, the North-West Frontier Province, Sind and Baluchistan amalgamated into a single Muslim State, and added that "Self-Government within the British Empire or without it, the formation of a consolidated North-West Indian Muslim State appears to be the final destiny of Muslims at least of North-West India." He emphasised that this centralisation of the most living portion of the Muslims of India whose military and police service had (notwithstanding unfair treatment from the British) made British rule possible in this country, would eventually solve the problem of India as well as of Asia. He maintained that thus possessing full opportu-

nities of development within the body politic of India, the North-West Indian Muslims would prove the best defenders of India against foreign invasion both of ideas and bayonets. "I, therefore, demand the formation of a consolidated Muslim State in the best interests of India and Islam. For India it means security and peace resulting for an internal balance of power; for Islam an opportunity to rid itself of the stamp that Arabian Imperialism was forced to give it, to mobilise its laws, its education, its culture, and to bring them into closer contact with its own original spirit and with the spirit of modern times."

Iqbal dwelt on the federal idea and said that redistribution of provinces must precede the introduction of the new constitution. He felt that the existing structure of provinces was largely responsible for the communal controversy, and said that Muslim India could have no objection to purely territorial electorates if the provinces were demarcated so as to secure comparatively homogeneous communities possessing linguistic, racial, cultural and religious unity. "But the discussion at the Round Table Conference of the communal question has demonstrated more clearly than ever the essential disparity between the two great cultural units of India. Yet the Prime Minister of England apparently refuses to see that the problem of India is international and not national. Obviously he does

not see that the model of British democracy cannot be of any use in a land of many nations."

Iqbal advised Muslims of India never to agree to a system, whether of British or of Indian origin, which virtually negatived the principle of true federation or failed to recognise them as a distinct political entity. He saw a menace to Islam in India in the scheme of federation which was being discussed at the Round Table Conference and remarked: "The truth of the matter is that participation of Indian Princes among whom only a few are Muslims in a federation scheme serves a double purpose. On the one hand it serves as an all-important factor in maintaining the British power in India practically as it is. On the other hand it gives an overwhelming majority to Hindus in an All-India Federal Assembly. In other words, the scheme appears to be aiming at a kind of understanding between Hindu India and British Imperialism. You perpetuate me in India and I, in turn, give you a Hindu oligarchy to keep all other Indian communities in perpetual subjection. If Muslims silently agree to any such scheme it will simply hasten their end as a political entity in India."

Iqbal, therefore, emphasised that the main demand of the Musalmans must be the redistribution of provinces to secure a perma-

nent communal settlement. But if that demand was ignored, then Muslims could not agree to give up separate electorates or their majority rights in the Punjab and Bengal, or 33 per cent representation in the Central Legislature. Iqbal doubted whether the Minorities Sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference would reach any settlement on the basis of the Delhi resolution. "If these demands are not agreed to, then a question of very great and far-reaching importance will arise for the community. Then will arrive the moment for independent and concerted political action by the Muslims of India." He held definite views regarding what the concerted political action would be, but he thought it proper to postpone their expression till the apprehended situation had actually arisen.

The Round Table Conference had concluded its sessions and the general principles regarding the Hindu-Muslim question and the All-India Federation had been agreed upon. Mr. MacDonald addressed the Conference on the 19th of January 1931, and laid down the bare outlines of the future constitution for India. A few days later, the Viceroy announced that the Government of India were pleased to order the release of Gandhi and members of the Congress Working Committee with a view to creating a friendly atmosphere so that the Congress leaders may discuss the

Prime Minister's announcement on its merits and may prepare themselves for participation in the forthcoming session of the Conference. The Congress leaders after release hastened to review the Indian political situation *de novo*.

The Liberal delegates to the Round Table Conference were on their way to India and appealed to the Congress leaders once again that no decision should be taken before they were able to place their views before the country. But the appeal went unheeded. Nevertheless, on their return to India, negotiations began between Gandhi and Lord Irwin through the good offices of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru and his colleagues. Lord Irwin's term of Viceroyalty was ending in summer, and Lord Willingdon was to relieve him. Mohammad Ali Jinnah had decided not to return to India but to practise his profession in the Privy Council in England. He hoped to enter Parliament in order to " fight India's battle in England ".

The Muslims of India had now become more active than before. In March, the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim Conference, formed for the express purpose of putting forward the Muslim claim before the Round Table Conference, demanded that in view of the proceedings of the Conference and the attitude of Hindu delegates towards the communal question, no constitution for

India should be framed without the previous settlement of the Hindu-Muslim problem; and that the Federal structure as envisaged by the Round Table Conference was unsatisfactory and should be improved. The Working Committee also held that the London Conference should be boycotted by the Musalmans, in case their political aspirations were not fully met. At this juncture Maulana Hasrat Mohani openly declared that Hindus were out for Hindu Raj and that their vigorous insistence on the principle of democracy of the Western type was nothing but a cloak to hide their real sentiment of perpetuating the political power of Hindus to the utter detriment of Muslims and minorities.

There was a considerable amount of tension in the political ranks of India and the public was living practically in suspense. The Gandhi-Irwin talks were proceeding apace and rumours of all kinds were filling the air. Finally, the much-awaited agreement was reached and Gandhi in an interview to a congregation of press reporters and newspaper correspondents explained that the pact would have been impossible without the patience exercised by the worthy Viceroy. The Congress according to him was going to participate in the Round Table Conference in order to achieve its goal of "Purna Swaraj" which was, he said, "indifferently translated as Complete Independence". He wanted

"to make federation, responsibility, safeguards, reservations or whatever other names that may be known by such as would promote the real growth of the country along political, social, economic and moral lines." Gandhi called this pact between him and Lord Irwin a victory for both. But a glance at its provisions makes it strangely clear that they were all related to the Civil Disobedience, the occasion for which could not have arisen at all if the movement had not been started. The pact included no mention of the previous conditions that Gandhi and Motilal Nehru had imposed as indispensable to their participation in the first Round Table Conference. It was in fact a reversal of the policy because Gandhi had once again landed himself and with him the Congress into a hopeless mess. Gandhi, however, alone was not responsible for this situation. In fact Jawaharlal Nehru's election to the Congress presidentship was the main cause of the Congress refusal to co-operate with the Conference on the first occasion.

The reader is aware that at the end of Motilal Nehru's term, the Congress had elected Gandhi as its next president, but the latter refused and suggested Jawaharlal's name for the Lahore Congress and ultimately it became an accomplished fact. At this time the Congress was badly divided on the question of the Round Table Conference.

"A section of the Congress," says F. W. Wilson in his *The Indian Chaos*, "notably that led by Jawaharlal Nehru, the President-designate, wished to try to force the Government to release all political prisoners, to give a pledge about Dominion Status and to show themselves willing to listen more attentively to the desires of the Indian people in the matter of day-to-day administration. It was pointed out to the Viceroy, and fully appreciated by him, that the promise of co-operation could most advantageously be coupled with certain concessions. Then occurred the debates in the Commons and in the Lords, and the unfortunate speech of the late Lord Russell. Indian opinion, fickle as ever, began to veer round, with the result that there had to be another conference of Indian leaders at Allahabad to reconsider the Delhi Manifesto, and discuss the whole situation. This again ended in a triumph for Moderate opinion. It was decided to bring private pressure to bear upon the Viceroy, with regard to the question of political prisoners, but to proceed on the assumption that the plan of a Round Table Conference was acceptable to Indian opinion. The constitutionalists in the Congress party left this meeting overjoyed. Motilal Nehru had shown himself most conciliatory. Pandit Malaviya was strong for co-operation. Gandhi himself was telling everybody that the Viceroy was a good man and that he was hoping for

the best. Alone in that throng, Jawaharlal Nehru kept his counsel. He had tried to complicate matters at Delhi by insisting upon the release of men convicted of attempted assassination. He had incurred a scathing rebuke from Gandhi and had been reduced to tears. Practically alone, he did not like the new scheme and, as events proved, he was to be the real author of the coming sabotage. Just before Christmas, Jawaharlal conducted, as President, the proceedings of the All-India Federation of Trade Unions at Nagpur. There he successfully led the revolt against the constitutionalists, and delivered an inaugural address which breathed class hatred and rampant communism. Then he returned to Allahabad for a day or two to prepare his speech for the Lahore Congress. The dates are important, as they convict Motilal and Gandhi of a deception which is hard to forgive. Jawaharlal left for Lahore about the middle of December to get into touch with the local atmosphere, and to superintend the arrangements for the Christmas week conference. Before he left, he showed his father the draft of his speech as President-elect. Motilal Nehru told me that it was not so extreme as he had thought it was going to be. Its true nature will be seen later. Meanwhile, Gandhi was indulging in an orgy of moral doubts and typical hesitations, but he was in close touch with Motilal. Motilal on his part was keeping in close touch with

Sapru, and one evening after the receipt of a communication from Gandhi, went to Sapru's house, and with him drafted a telegram to the Viceroy asking for an interview to clarify certain matters. That evening he was talking brightly and humorously about his forthcoming visit to London. The Viceroy was due to return to Delhi on the early morning of December 23rd, and, through Sir Malcolm Hailey, wired to Sapru making an appointment with Gandhi, Motilal, Patel, Jinnah and Sapru for the afternoon of the 23rd. In the interval Motilal followed his son to Lahore, and what happened there is a secret known only to the Congress leaders. The most obvious theory is that at Lahore Motilal saw quite clearly that there was going to be a majority in the Congress in support of Independence, and against the acceptance of the Round Table Conference. He saw that if he and Gandhi were to go there as advocates of the co-operation, there would be a split in the Congress ranks, and the beloved son would find himself isolated, heading the Extremists. He then had to make a rapid decision. If he allowed Congress to be split, the Moderates had triumphed, and the Viceroy's policy was bound to be an overwhelming success. If he supported his son, the unity of Congress would be secured, its prestige in the eyes of the people would be enhanced, and the only fly in the ointment would be that he would have to break faith with Sapru and Lord

Irwin. The only question was when it came to a tussle between his love for his son and his faith to his friends: What was going to be the question on which he would break?

"The morning of the 23rd was ushered in by a stupid and dastardly attempt to bomb the Viceroy's train. Lord Irwin and his entourage escaped death by a miracle, and proceeded outwardly unmoved to take up residence at the new Viceregal House at Delhi. Gandhi and Motilal, who had been in close touch and conference, had arrived the day before with their secret plan settled and ready for execution. Sapru and Jinnah arrived in high spirits, expecting that the afternoon conference would finally and definitely secure Congress support. Not even Speaker Patel was in the secret, and he too was optimistic. Mrs. Naidu was present, cheerful and vivacious as ever, not knowing and having no inkling as to what was going to happen. Gandhi was enjoying one of his usual and convenient days of silence, and so no preliminary conference between the Indians was possible. Motilal was observed to be distinctly distant and secretive, and after lunch the five men proceeded to see Lord Irwin. Gandhi began the proceedings with a perfunctory congratulatory statement about the Viceroy's escape. The Viceroy, who expected a reasonable sincere request for enlightenment, was so prepared to co-operate that he had actually

brought with him a list of certain political prisoners, whose release he was willing to contemplate. Then the bombshell was thrown Gandhi asked the Viceroy to give a pledge that the Round Table Conference would recommend nothing short of full Dominion Status, and that the British Government would honour such a pledge. The Viceroy, to put it mildly, was flabbergasted. Sapru, Jinnah and Patel felt themselves betrayed and could not believe their ears. Gandhi and Motilal were rude to their colleagues and rude to the Viceroy. They had come determined to force a break, and spared no pains to succeed. What was asked of Lord Irwin was a complete impossibility. The essence of the proposed Round Table Conference was that it should be a free and open discussion, and how could Lord Irwin give any pledge as to what Parliament would do in the future? Both Gandhi and Motilal have denied the substance of this interview. The Congress naturally has asserted that his version is incorrect, but it is, I maintain, an accurate representation of what took place and is based on the notes of the conversation, which were taken down during the meeting by the Viceroy's Private Secretary. The official record still exists. Unusual care was taken to see that Mr. Cunningham's notes agreed with the recollection of those present, and his original draft was amended and expanded in at least one instance, of which I

have personal knowledge. Gandhi and Motilal retired from this interview armed with a fresh grievance against the Government. Motilal had escaped from the unwelcome shackles of the Moderate. He had betrayed his friend and ally Sapru and could go to Lahore surrounded with a halo of moderation, but also decorated with the garland of Congress patriotism. Gandhi, too, had found a way out from an association which would circumscribe his personal prestige and opportunities for personal popularity. The two Congress leaders hastened to give their version to the public. In their view the offer of the British Government was not sincere. It meant nothing. It was merely beating about the bush. Gandhi said that he had given the British Government a year to show itself amenable to reason, and prepared to accept Dominion Status according to the Nehru Report model. He had waited the whole year, he said, expecting some gesture, some evidence of sincerity. He could find nothing substantial in the Viceregal Declaration, nothing satisfactory in his conversations wirh Lord Irwin. He then proceeded to weep buckets of crocodile tears, and to lament that if something satisfactory did not happen before midnight of December 31st, he would with extreme reluctance, and after a Gethsemane of prayer and fasting, wake up on January 1st a convinced believer in Independence."

Jawaharlal was thus saved from political isolation, and when, after a few months, Motilal died and the Congress leadership passed on to Sardar Patel, Gandhi found the horizon clear to pursue his line of action, at the cost of the prestige and honour of the Indian National Congress and recommended the Gandhi-Irwin Pact to his followers in the following terms: "If the Congress succeeds in making its position acceptable to the Conference, then I claim that the fruit of that effort will be complete independence. But I know that the way to it is weary. There are many rocks, many pitfalls to be found across the way. But if Congressmen will approach the new task to which they are called with confidence and courage, I have no misgivings about the result. It is, therefore, in their hands either to make something noble and worth looking at out of the new opportunity that has come to them, or, by lack of self-confidence and want of courage, to fritter away the opportunity. But I know that in this task Congressmen will require the aid of the other parties, the aid of the great Princes of India, and last, but by no means the least, the aid of Englishmen. I need not make any appeal at the present juncture to the different parties. I have little doubt that they are no less eager than Congressmen for the real freedom of their country."

During the intervening period the

attitude of the Conservative Party in British Parliament had become hostile towards the Indian Reforms, and Mr. Baldwin was being pressed from all sides to withdraw his compromising neutrality in this regard. The revolt was led by Mr. Churchill who was at the time already a powerful element in British politics.

Mr. Winston Churchill, on the 23rd of February, 1931, sought a vote of confidence from his constituents for his attitude towards India which involved his resignation from the Conservative "Shadow Cabinet." Addressing the Council of the West Essex Unionist Association, at its meeting in London, convened at his request, Mr. Churchill reviewed the position in India saying that he would be unable to serve any administration about whose Indian policy he had not been reassured. He said that it was alarming and nauseating to see Gandhi, "an Inner Temple lawyer, now a seditious fakir, striding half-naked up the steps of the Viceregal Palace to parley on equal terms with the representative of the King-Emperor." Gandhi's well-known aims, according to Mr. Churchill, were the strange basis for the discussions which were intended to be preliminary to another Round Table Conference in India. Mr. Churchill added it was vital that the Conservative Party should immediately arouse public opinion.

He intended to do his best and he would be much strengthened if his constituents voted confidence in him.

India, Mr. Churchill said, was not an ordinary party-question. It was a supreme issue comparable to that of August 4, 1914, and comparable to the General Strike. To entrust the welfare of 300 toiling millions to the oligarchy of Hindu politicians would mean their exploitation and oppression similar to the proletariat of China. It would be a shameful act of cowardice, desertion and dishonour. He concluded: "The decisive opportunity may soon be at hand. Victory may again reward the Conservative Party. Let it be a victory which will proclaim to the world that the heart of the Empire is true and that its hand is just and strong." Mr. Churchill pointed out that the statements which had lately been made on Mr. Baldwin's authority that the Conservatives were not committed to anything except to give fair consideration to any proposals made were very different from the impression which Britain had sustained and which had been conveyed to Indian politicians. He said that the delegates returning to India from the Round Table Conference were overjoyed to receive the cable giving the purport of Mr. Baldwin's speech in the House of Commons on January 26. They naturally

assumed that the Conservatives were prepared to implement the federal constitution with a central responsible government. The delegates, on the strength of this, drafted a manifesto to the Congress and had laboured ever since to persuade the more extreme elements to join another Conference to be held in India. Mr. Churchill declared that "they ought to be told, as we have been told, that the Conservative Party is wholly not committed and they have been unintentionally misled." The meeting unanimously passed a resolution expressing unabated confidence in Mr. Churchill.

The Conservative Party was in favour of provincial autonomy, but was opposed to the transfer of power at the Centre and by the middle of March, prominent Tories declined to co-operate with the Round Table Conference on the ground that the question of Indian Constitution was entirely in the hands of Indians themselves and that unless there was an agreement among the various sections of India's public opinion the matter was beyond the scope of Parliament —an argument which was later a source of a bitter criticism from the so-called nationalist press. The Conservative Party even went to the extent of demanding the dissolution of the Round Table Conference. But Mr. Wedgwood Benn, Secretary of State for India, passionately appealed for

allowing the Conference to proceed with its work and ultimately carried the day, specially as the Viceroy was despatching favourable reports from India.

At home, in India, things were moving in a different direction. The All-India Muslim League once again registered a historical episode in the annals of Indian politics. Gandhi was invited to address the League on the Hindu-Muslim question and spoke in the following words:

"Maulvi Mohammad Yakub had remarked that my coming meant the coming of twenty-one crores of Indians. Brethren, I am a Bania and there is no limit to my greed. It has always been my dream and heart's desire to speak not only for twenty-one crores but for thirty crores of India. Today you may not accept that position of mine. But I may assure you that my early upbringing and training in my childhood and youth have been to strive for Hindu-Muslim unity and none today may dismiss it merely as a craze of my old age. My heart is confident that God will grant me that position when I may speak for the whole of India and if I may have to die striving for that ideal, I shall achieve peace of my heart. I do not know what will be the result of my talks with the Viceroy. But if God wishes the Congress to participate in the Conference, and if there is a settlement

between Government and the Congress, the question of Hindu-Muslim unity will be one which will engage our first attention. And I give you all the assurance at my command that we will do what lies in our power to solve the Hindu-Muslim question. Rest assured that it is not a matter of loaves and fishes, but of trust and love. If Hindus and Musalmans are the two eyes of India, as Sir Syed Ahmad Khan had said, there should be no occasion for quarrel or distrust. No one can say that one eye is better than the other. It is quite conceivable that two brothers may have different faiths, and yet both may live in harmony and peace. As for myself, if you slightly let ajar the window of your heart, I will quietly slip in, for I believe there can be no freedom for this country without Hindu-Muslim settlement. I do hope you will continue to invite me to such conferences and I assure you that you will not repent."

The country was now once again in a turmoil and public opinion was hopelessly divided. The Gandhi-Irwin Pact, the Federal Constitution and the Round Table Conference were the topics of the day. But the main question on which attention was mostly riveted was that of Hindu-Muslim settlement. The League had already made a friendly gesture. But the Hindu Mahasabha was challenging Gandhi's representative character and his eligibility of negotiating on

behalf of Hindus. The All-India Muslim Conference, on the other hand, through its secretary, Shafi Daoodi, was voicing the sentiments of that group. He, in a statement, declared that Musalmans were more hardened on the question of separate electorates "having regard to the unfortunate mentality displayed by the Hindu community even in recent times." Congress, he said, was out to mislead the world by saying that Musalmans were divided.

The history of the Muslim demands has been traced in the previous pages. It will be recalled that since the publication of the famous fourteen points of Mohammad Ali Jinnah very little was left, over which the Musalmans could be said to be divided, especially when the resolution embodying the fourteen points was drafted with a view to accommodating all the various groups of Muslims within and without the League. The proceedings of the Round Table Conference had made it amply clear that the questions of Sind and Frontier Reforms had been finally agreed upon and the only hitch that remained in the communal settlement was that of representation at the Centre and that of separate electorates. The Musalmans of India were, however, unanimous in their demand of one-third representation in the Centre, and the question of separate electorates was favoured by a majority. It may

be that the Congress Muslims who styled themselves as "Nationalists" were not in favour of these two points, but their number was very small as compared to that of those who favoured them and their will could not be taken as reflecting the will of the entire Muslim nation. To subjugate the popular will by those of the nationalist Muslims was the negation of the very principle of democracy for which they claimed to stand and the Congress and Gandhi committed a great blunder in overrating their influence on the public mind.

The Karachi session of the Congress was to examine the provisions of the Gandhi-Irwin Pact and to take a decision on it. Criticism of Gandhi's political sagacity had already begun. The younger generation of India's political zealots were determined to fight the issues and had it not been for Gandhi's extraordinary capacity for the jugglery of words and for the peculiar Indian temperament of succumbing to spiritual mysticism, Gandhi's leadership would have been torn to pieces. As soon as he reached Karachi, Gandhi began to spread a particular structure of verbosity and in the din of high-sounding phrases and catchwords the less blessed of his followers were lost to themselves and stood aghast to discover that they had done the very opposite of what they intended to do. Gandhi said

he would refuse to go to London if he failed to solve the communal question in India. Arbitration of this tangle by the British or by any other tribunal was, in his opinion, unbecoming and humiliating. "I do not guarantee," he said, "that we will come back with Swaraj, but I guarantee that we won't return with slavery." Words of this kind were poured upon an anxious public in huge torrents, but they were never honoured.

On his return from Karachi, Gandhi busied himself with exploring the possibilities of the solution of the communal issue and opened his talks with Muslim leaders. The history of those talks is yet to be narrated in detail, and most of those who could give the correct picture from the Muslim point of view are no more amongst us. But the result of those talks is well known. The negotiations broke down with a tremendous thud. Gandhi issued a lengthy statement clearing his position. In the first instance he tried to link up the cause of Muslims with that of Sikhs—a move, which, for the time being, succeeded in diverting the attention of his followers from the main plank of his policy. And then he raised the storm that there was lack of unanimity on the part of Muslims on a "formula." The one that was presented to the Congress deputation by the Muslims was not, in his opinion, a "unanimous minimum." The

most interesting part of the statement was its concluding portion wherein he sought shelter behind the strange plea that if Muslims insisited upon the settlement of the communal question before a constitution for India could be drafted, it would amount to their being a hindrance in the way of India's political salvation. "I for one," said he, "would be content to wait if the accredited leaders of Musalmans or Sikhs would oppose the attainmen of Swaraj constitution. The fight for Swaraj once begun can only end when a constitution, which is its visible symbol, is framed and passed. The next phase of the struggle, in the absence of a communal solution, may, therefore, assume a different form, the goal still remaining the same."

But what was the "next phase of the struggle?" It is perhaps evident from the resolution of the Congress Working Committee passed in June. "The Committee is of the opinion," the resolution ran, "that, even should these efforts unfortunately fail, in order to avoid any possibility of the Congress attitude being misunderstood in any shape or form, other conditions being favourable, Mahatma Gandhi should represent the Congress at the Round Table Conference, if thereto required, for the presentation of the Congress position." The resolution of the Congress Working Committee came as a rude shock to Muslim especially when Gandhi

started to demand that Dr. Ansari should also be nominated to the Conference in order to represent the Muslim views. Dr. Ansari was a Congressman and had in the past opposed Jinnah's fourteen points. His presence, therefore, could never be tolerated by the Muslims as a representative. Gandhi washed his hands clean of the affair. He said he could not carry the majority in the Congress Working Committee and that his " nature being essentially democratic " he could not flout the mandate of the Committee. It is strange that a man who could secure a unanimous approval of the Congress Warking Committee on a previous occassion on an utterly humiliating proposition like Gandhi-Irwin Pact, who could score a " personal triumph " at the Karachi Congress where thousands of Congressmen gathered, could not carry a majority with him in a Committee of the same organisation composed of not more than a score members, and that too on an issue of vital importance to India.

The consequence was inevitable. Muslims openly condemned the Congress as a Hindu body and Gandhi lost all grace with them. Early in September Mohammad Ali Jinnah returned to India for a few days prior to his attending the second Round Table Conference. In a speech at Bombay he expressed the view that the present age was an age of orga-

nisation and unless the Muslims organised themselves there was no salvation for them. He was glad, however, to observe that members of his community were waking up and that there was great activity among them. "I am an Indian first and a Muslim afterwards," he said. "But at the same time I agree that no Indian can ever serve his country if he neglects the interests of the Muslims, because it is by making Muslims strong by bringing them together, by encouraging them and by making them useful citizens of the State that you will be able to serve your country. What is a State? What is representative government? Does it mean that the seventy million Muslims should be tied hand and foot in a constitution where a particular class of Hindus can possibly tyrannise over and deal with them as they like? Is that representative government? Is that democratic government? Certainly not." Remarking about the future constitution of India, Jinnah emphatically declared that no government of any country could succeed by keeping the minorities under bondage and perpetual subjugation. Similarly nobody could hope to make India strong by suppressing the vital interests and political aspirations of Muslims and untouchables, and people trying to indulge in such manoeuvres were only leading India to a weak and degrading position from which it would

be hard for her to recover. "I have said this openly. I have no eye on any party. I have no mind for popularity. I can tell you honestly that the Hindus are foolish, utterly foolish in the attitude that they have adopted to-day." Gandhi, he said, had at last agreed to attend the Conference. He too was going there. But none of them could represent India. The British Government would tell them that they were not agreed. Every Government presupposed certain requisite conditions, namely, that the people should be so trained and should live so harmoniously that whatever differences, whatever difficulties there might be, they themselves must be able to solve them. Supposing the British Government had given a constitution to India according to the Hindu demand, naturally the Muslims would be opposed to it and would resort to every means that was possible to break and destroy it. "The bulk of the Hindus have lost their heads and their mentality, perhaps you may not know, but I know it. I assure you that unless Hindus will have the courage and confidence—they are afraid of Muslims—this India will never get Swaraj. It is not the joint or separate electorates or five or ten seats. Hindus have not the necessary courage and Hindus are afraid of Muslims." He emphasised the need of discipline among Muslims and said even

in the Punjab and Bengal where they were in a majority, they must organise themselves and observe discipline. He said, in the Punjab and Bengal, Hindus were refusing to give Muslims a statutory majority. "I like straight play. Tell me that I do not want to give you a majority in the Punjab and Bengal. Hindus do not say that. Then say, you can have a majority with joint electorates. Hindus know perfectly well that Muslims have got only forty per cent of voters in these provinces." Jinnah contended that unless certain reasonable safeguards and brakes were provided for the purpose of preventing any undue mischief, the constitution would never work.

On the eve of his departure for London, a representative of the *Times of India*, Bombay, approached him in order to know his views about the forthcoming Round Table Conference. He said, "The success or failure of the Round Table Conference is entirely dependent upon the consideration of the Hindu-Muslim question. I hope that we may be able to settle the question and further trust that the demands of every minority will be met in a manner that will give that particular community a sense of security and secure its willing allegiance to the constitution. The problem of the future

constitution of India is stupendous and one feels there are rocks ahead, but given goodwill and determination, we may yet find a solution which will bring peace and prosperity to the people of India. I am not likely to return for a considerably long time. Nevertheless, India's welfare and her future progress will be constantly nearest my heart. I shall spare no efforts to serve India. I have a word to say to the people of Bombay. Bombay was once famous for sound and practical judgment in all big issues that faced India. I appeal to the people of Bombay not to lose that position. I regret to find that at the present moment, however, the city of Bombay is a bit unhinged, but I have confidence that it will regain its past reputation and will give a sound lead to the whole country."

The Round Table Conference assembled in the midst of much pomp and show. Gandhi had worked up the imagination of his hosts and colleagues to such a pitch that attraction was bound to be centred on him. The Conference began and the question of the minorities came up for discussion before its special Committee. But the attitude of the Hindu delegates made the agreement of any sort utterly impossible. Gandhi on the 9th of October announced: "It is with deep sorrow and deeper humiliation that I have

to announce the utter failure on my part to secure an agreed solution of the communal question through informal conversations among and with the representatives of the different groups." He did not, however, end there but attributed the reason of this failure to the constitution of the Indian delegation, whose members were not the elected representatives of the communities concerned but nominated by the Government. The implication was that had Muslims and minorities been represented by the henchmen of the Congress the solution of it would have been easy. Naturally for Gandhi it would have been but would it have been a satisfactory solution? That he did not pause to consider. He put forward the extraordinary suggestion that the Minorities Sub-Committee be adjourned *sine die*, or in the alternative a clause be inserted in the Constitution of India providing that the Constitution would not come into force before a solution of the communal issue could be effected. Both of these suggestions were rejected by the Conference. Strangely enough, however, the minorities settled their own affairs among themselves, and thereby demonstrated to the world that the hitch that existed in the way of communal concord was due to the irreconcilable Hindu element in the Minorities Sub-Committee of the Round Table Conference. A suggestion was put forward by the Prime Minister that if all the delegates signed a pledge to abide by his

verdict he would be willing to use his discretion and give his judgment. That was done and the result was the Communal Award. Mr. MacDonald had realised that the minorities were vehement in their demand of self-expression and that they wanted to remain as separate entities. He knew that agreement was not impossible if Hindus were willing to face facts, and the subsequent agreement between the minorities out of the Committee without the help of the Hindu delegates, confirmed his observations.

This also confirmed Jinnah's assertions at Bombay that Hindus were afraid of Muslims and by the end of October Gandhi's utterance at Oxford left no doubt in anybody's mind. Asked how Congress would defend the North-West Frontier, Mr. Gandhi replied that the only danger was the possible disloyalty of the Indian Muslims to India, but he was sure that they would never combine with a foreign invader from the North-West. The implication was obvious. How to counteract such a possibility? How to safeguard against such a contingency? All these questions had been answered by Lala Lajpat Rai. Democracy, indivisible unity of India, responsibility to the Legislature elected through an adult suffrage and a show of anti-British sentiment keeping loopholes for negotiations with them, would do the task, and Muslims or other groups could be put in the wrong with-

out much effort.

After the Round Table Conference Jinnah stayed on in England as a practising lawyer and came back to India only in April, 1934. Within the course of these few years India had passed through many stages. Movements were launched and abandoned by the Congress. Attempts were made for a communal settlement and the parties became more and more suspicious of each other. The White Paper was published and authorities were waiting for the parties concerned to pass their verdict on it. The questions before the Muslims were also manifold. During 1933 an attempt had been made to bring about greater unity in the ranks of the Muslims. Early in the year the Muslim League had split into two rival sections, over the question of fusing the League with the other big Muslim organisation—the Muslim Conference. An attempt to achieve unity was made by His Highness the Agha Khan during the first quarter of 1934. He failed in this particular object but to some extent composed differences between individual leaders of the two main organisations by a reshuffling of office-bearers.

In April 1934 the Council of the All-India Muslim League met to consider the situation. Mohammad Ali Jinnah once again made a vigorous bid to convince all Muslim

groups that the League was the only organisation which could guard the interests of Muslims and he succeeded to a great measure. The Council was, therefore, one in which were seen all the shades of opinion existing among Musalmans. Nationalist Muslims, leaders of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema, members of the Muslim Conference and all others were present and contributed their share to its deliberations. This Council was important from another point of view. A few days before Jinnah had condemned the White Paper proposals as a measure not calculated to advance the interests of India, and the League Council was now meeting under his presidentship. The League resolved "that the Council accept the Communal Award so far as it goes until a substitute is agreed upon by the various communities and parties to secure such future constitution for India as would be acceptable to the country." A resolution for sending a deputation to His Excellency the Viceroy in connection with the question of Palestine, was also adopted. It was decided that the constitution of the All-India Muslim League be revised to suit the prevailing political conditions of the country and to strengthen and revive its political branches.

After the conclusion of the meeting of the League Council, a strong plea for Hindu-Muslim unity was made by Mohammad Ali Jinnah in the course of an interview to a press

representative in which he gave his impressions. "After two days' deliberations of the Council meeting," said he, "which was the most representative I have seen during my connection with the League, extending now for more than twenty years, I must say that I was immensely impressed with most of the speeches made there by the various leaders, who had come from different provinces in India. To condemn the White Paper one does not require argument or reasons, but one has only got to read the White Paper proposals and understand them. While many of us feel that this treacherous scheme is almost at our door—and I for one have not hesitated to declare my views with regard to the scheme—the problem of problems which still confronts us is how to avert its being foisted upon India. That cannot be achieved and will not be achieved until there is unity between Hindus and Muslims. Nothing will give me greater happiness than to bring about complete co-operation and friendship between Hindus and Muslims and in this desire my impression is that I have the solid support of the Muslims.

"The Council has passed a resolution which is now before the public. It clearly indicates how that unity can be achieved immediately. On my return to India I have seen abundant evidence to show that Hindus and Muslims think alike in terms of the

political evolution of the country. The emphasis which the Muslims place on the Communal Award is only an indication of their desire to make sure that any national demand, which they join to put forward on behalf of the country, will incorporate the safeguards which the Muslims consider as the minimum. The Muslims are in no way behind any other community in their demand for national Self-Government. The crux of the whole issue, therefore, is whether we can completely assure Muslims that the safeguards to which they attach vital importance will be embodied in the future constitution of India."

Soon after Jinnah again left for England.

The Central Assembly elections came off at the end of the year 1934. At this juncture it was once again the fate of the Congress to be divided within itself. While Gandhi was busy with his programme of "uplifting" the untouchables (without abolishing caste) and with his fa[illegible] political and social purposes, the Congress was being torn from one end to the other by opposite forces. The Congress Socialist group became more and more active and the Swarajist Party was once again revived. The Hindu Mahasabha became antagonistic to the Congress and threatened to set up its own candidates for the Assembly. The ultimate result was that Malavya and Aney resigned from the Congress Parliamentary Board over the communal issue

and having decided to set up their own party, proceeded to hold the inaugural meeting at Calcutta on the 18th and 19th August 1930. The fire of the Pandit's enthusiasm, however, which was to kindle into being a Nationalist Party embracing Indians of all castes and creeds, with the Pandit himself as the Hindu champion against the Communal Award had died down considerably in the weeks which had elapsed since the Benares meeting. When Bhai Parmanand, on behalf of the Hindu Mahasabha and the President of the National Liberal Federation, arrived in Calcutta on invitation, they found that the projected all-embracing Nationalist Party had crystallised into a "Congress" Nationalist Party, with membership restricted only to good Congressmen. This naturally caused indignation among the non-Congressmen who had been invited. "The Nationalist Party," a Liberal paper declared, "went up like a rocket, but has come down like a stick." There was thus chaos in Hindu politics.

In contrast to this chaotic state of the Congress and the Hindus, Muslim politics during this period present a measure of consistency and singleness of purpose. With the approach of the Assembly elections the desire for effecting some sort of combination for electioneering purposes resulted in a joint session in Simla of the executives of the two organisations. The meeting passed a number

of joint resolutions on the 13th of August 1933, followed by a joint election manifesto which made it clear how signally Congress had failed to appeal to Muslim opinion. The Muslim community was exhorted to present a united front to opponents of the Communal Award and the principle of separate electorates; to vote only for such candidates as subscribed to the principles and policy of the All-India Muslim Conference or the All-India Muslim League,—particularly with regard to the Communal Award and separate electorates, the safeguards demanded by Muslims in the constitution, and adequate representation by special reservation for Muslims in all Services. Further, the manifesto also emphasised the ultimate identity of interests between the Hindu Mahasabha who openly condemned Mr. MacDonald's Award and the Congress who were out to procure its lapse by the total rejection of the White Paper. Among special demands set forth in the resolutions was that Sind should immediately be constituted a separate Province, and reforms granted in Baluchistan; that the Muslim proportion in the Central Services should be 33 per cent instead of 25 per cent as proposed in the Government of India Resolution; and that the leader of the "Red Shirt" movement in the Frontier Province should be set at liberty.

At this time Mohammad Ali Jinnah was still in England, but Muslims of Bombay

once again pressed him that he should accept their representation and when the nomination papers were scrutinised on the 11th of October 1934 it was found that his was the only nomination and he was consequently returned unopposed. The first session of this new Assembly met in January 1935 and Jinnah came out to India to participate in it. The strength of the various parties in the Assembly of this new Assembly was as follows: Congress party 44, Congress-Nationalist party 11, Independent party 22 out of which 18 were Muslims, European group 11, officials 26, nominated non-officials 13. The Government could normally rely on about 50 votes; the Congress party and the Congress-Nationalist party combined, on 55. Thus the results of most of divisions depended upon the attitude adopted by the Independent party which functioned under the leadership of Jinnah.

The report of the Joint Parliamentary Committee, which was published in India in November 1934, was debated during three days. On the 4th of February, the Leader of the House, Sir N. N. Sircar, moved "that the report of the Joint Committee on Indian Constitutional Reform be taken into consideration." A large number of amendments to this motion were tabled and the outcome of the debate was eagerly awaited by the public outside. The first amendment on which a

division was taken was that moved on the 7th February by the Leader of the Congress party, Bhulabhai Desai. This amendment was to the effect that, as the proposed new Constitution had been " conceived in a spirit of Imperialist domination " and would transfer " no real power to the people of India ", it should not be introduced. Mohammad Ali Jinnah also moved an amendment and for the purpose of voting he had divided it into three parts. The first related to the Communal Award, the second to the scheme of Provincial Government, and the third to the scheme of Central Government. It ran thus:

" 1. That this Assembly accepts the Communal Award, so far as it goes, until a substitute is agreed upon by the various communities concerned.

" 2. As regards the scheme of Provincial Government, this House is of opinion that it is most unsatisfactory and disappointing inasmuch as it includes various objectionable features, particularly the establishment of Second Chambers, the extraordinary and special powers of the Governors, provisions relating to Police rules, Secret Service and Intelligence Departments, which render the real control and responsibility of the Executive and Legislature ineffective, and, therefore unless these objectionable features are

removed, it will not satisfy any section of Indian opinion.

"3. With respect to the scheme of the Central Government, called 'All-India Federation', this House is clearly of opinion that it is fundamentally bad and totally unacceptable to the people of British India, and therefore recommends to the Government of India to advise His Majesty's Government not to proceed with any legislation based on this scheme and urges that immediate efforts should be made to consider how best to establish in British India alone a real and complete Responsible Government, and with that view, take steps to review the whole position in consultation with Indian opinion without delay."

To the first part of Jinnah's amendment Bhulabhai Desai again moved an amendment that the Assembly should "refrain from expressing any opinion at the present juncture either accepting or rejecting the Communal Award." Desai's first amendment was rejected by 72 votes to 61. His amendment to Jinnah's amendment was lost by 84 votes to 44. Jinnah was then asked to move his amendment and he said: "My amendment accepts the Communal Award and remember, until when? until a substitute is agreed upon between the communities concerned. Now, it may be that our Hindu friends are not

satisfied with the Communal Award, but at the same time I can also tell the House that my Muslim friends are not satisfied with it either, because it does not meet their full demand. And speaking for myself, personally, I am not satisfied with the Communal Award, and, again speaking as an individual, my self-respect will never be satisfied until we produce our own scheme. Do not relegate me only to God, but take me into consideration also. But why do I accept it? I do not want to go into past history, but I can tell the House that I accept it because we have done everything that we could so far to come to a settlement, and though, so far, we have not been able to come to a settlement, therefore, whether I like it or whether I do not like it, I accept it, because unless I accept that, no scheme of Constitution is possible. Therefore, please stop this talk of rejection now. For the time being, let it stand." As regards the other two parts of his amendment Jinnah declared: "I, on the other hand, say: 'Yes, I have examined it: it is bad as far as provinces go: and the Central scheme is totally bad, fundamentally bad.' However, I do not stop there, but I make you a counter-proposal, because, I think, it is my duty not merely to indulge in a flat negative. You will say: 'What do you want then?' Well, Moses does not want to be in darkness for all time. Moses says to you: 'This is my alternative and proceed with it. Modify the Provincial

scheme, drop the Central scheme, and review the whole position in consultation with Indian opinion with a view to establishing complete responsible Government in British India."

The reference to Moses was by way of a retort to a jest made in the House by the Home Member about "Moses being in the dark".

The first part of the amendment was then put to vote and was adopted by 68 votes to 15, the Congress remaining neutral. The House then divided on the second and third parts of Jinnah's amendment taken together and these were adopted by 74 votes to 58. The result of the debate was hailed as a personal triumph of Mohammad Ali Jinnah. "Mr. Jinnah convinced the Congress Party," says O. N. Nambiyar in his *From India's Press Gallery*, "that Indian Muslims had no faith in the Congress and that, whether in the Central Legislative Assembly or outside, they would refuse to support any line of action that ignored the interests of Indian Muslims."

Jinnah's speech in the Assembly once again paved the way to communal harmony and negotiations between him and Rajindra Prasad, then President of the Congress, started with renewed efforts.

A curious mixture of earnestness and

suspicion characterised the negotiations in Delhi to bring about a settlement of the communal problem and to substitute the resultant agreement in place of the Communal Award. There was little doubt that the principal participants, Babu Rajendra Prasad and Mohammad Ali Jinnah, were keen on carrying their negotiations to a successful conclusion. So were most of the Congressmen and the right wing of the Muslim section. The distrust came, however, from the Hindus of the Punjab and Bengal and the Sikhs, who were the bitterest opponents of the Award.

Speaking at a Delhi College on the 18th of February 1935, Jinnah declared: "If I can achieve this unity, believe me, half the battle of the country's freedom is won . . . So long as Hindus and Muslims are not united, let me tell you, there is no hope for India and we shall both remain slaves of foreign domination." Jinnah had been widely criticised for the attitude adopted by him in the Assembly in regard to the unofficial amendments to the resolution on the Report tabled by the Leader of the Opposition in the House. He had been accused of exploiting the key-position of his party for communal advantage and of allowing his personal vanity to jeopardise the country's interests. To these charges he replied with unusual humility: "It is not my victory: it is a national victory." He acknowledged the support he had received

from other groups. He went a step further and pointed out that subsequent developments had shown that his was merely a "paper victory," adding: "Is Parliament going to honour that resolution of ours? Is it going to have the slightest effect on the mind of His Majesty's Government?"

Why, then, did he press his amendment on the Award? Why did he seek and obtain support for the political parts of his amendment? The answer to these questions was to be found in the peculiar position which he occupied in the Indian political world. A man of superb independence, he was also a sound patriot; he had not failed to be in the vanguard of any truly national movement. At the same time, commonsense, with which he had been endowed in abundance, had forced on him the conviction that without Hindu-Muslim unity no progress was possible in India. He would forfeit his political usefulness if he failed to carry the Muslims with him. Here, again, he occupied a difficult position. Extremist Hindus, who were ready to admire his patriotism and idependence, were reluctant to tolerate his advocacy of the Muslim cause. On the other hand, left-wing Muslims, who naturally regarded with suspicion every action and utterance of the Hindu Mahasabhaites, complained that he was not sufficiently firm on Muslim demands. With sympathies towards both and having to face

hostility from both, Jinnah was striving hard to bring about unity, for which he had already received thanks in advance from the nationalist press.

Rajendra Prasad's task was no less difficult. His position was analogous to that of Jinnah. As President of the Congress, which had pledged itself not to accept any settlement which did not carry with it the consent of all parties and communities, he felt called upon to pull with him the Muslims no less than the Hindus. It was in this spirit that he started negotiations with Jinnah even before the Assembly debate. Indeed, as *Advance* observed, " the Congress has not done well in sitting idle for so many months, especially when it adopted a resolution stating that every endeavour would be made to bring about a settlement between the communities concerned."

The negotiations were started rather late, and there was not much time left between then and the date fixed for the debate. In view of the shortness of time at their disposal, it was suggested by some that they should bend their efforts first to an arrangement as far as the debate was concerned and postpone for later consideration the larger issues. But this was not acceptable to the Muslims, who were unwilling to miss the opportunity to secure the Assembly's formal

approval to the Award in the absence of a general agreement. A comprehensive settlement was not possible then, and a party understanding for purposes of the debate was not acceptable. The whole thing therefore fell through, with the result that Jinnah had to adopt an attitude that he did towards the Communal Award. All parties bowed to the inevitable, but Jinnah and Rajendra Prasad were anxious to pick up the threads left loose in the debate. The Muslims at first insisted on having a definite set of proposals from the other side, but when it was pointed out that negotiations must begin with a clean slate and in a spirit of mutual give-and-take, unhampered by predetermined proposals, Mohammad Ali Jinnah yielded.

So anxious was he for this settlement that he absented himself from the debates of the Assembly so as to be free to take part in the conversations. The special correspondent of the *Indian Nation* saw some political significance in Jinnah's "non-participation in the Agha Khan dinner either as a host or as a guest," and concluded that "he is anxious to retain the freedom for communal understanding through his talks which are now on."

The communal talks, however, once again failed and the two leaders parted as good friends.

By the end of April 1935, Mohammad Ali Jinnah was called upon by the Muslim students of Bombay to explain to them the various aspects of the Indian political situation and to lay before them his views regarding the Communal Award and the communal talks.

Mohammad Ali Jinnah briefly reviewed the work of the previous Assembly session and said that he tried his best to settle with Rajendra Prasad the Hindu-Muslim question, but did not succeed. The position of the Muslims, both in the Assembly and in the public life, was a very difficult one. If they did not agree with the Government or were opposed to the Government they were incurring their displeasure although the Government did not say so openly. But in his opinion the Muslims had to incur the displeasure of the Government when it was a question of the larger interests of India. They could not be expected always to support the Government and their support or opposition depended merely on the feasibility of a certain move and on its usefulness to India.

The position of Muslims *vis-a-vis* their Hindu friends, on the other hand, was still more difficult. He said that there existed two schools of thought among the Hindu politicians. One consisted mainly of the leaders of the Congress and the other of

those of Mahasabha. So far as the Congress was concerned, he was really glad that it had realised more than ever that without Hindu-Muslim unity, there was no hope of any great achievement in the country in regard to constitutional advance or any other advance for that matter. This was a very good sign. But, unfortunately, in this school also there were some who thought that the Muslims were not sufficiently patriotic. It would be admitted, he thought, that on vitally important occasions, although the Muslim members of the Assembly did not subscribe to the policy and programme of the Congress party, the bulk of the Muslims walked into the lobby which favoured popular opinion and served national interests. In spite of that, there was a section among the Congress which doubted their patriotism, thinking that they might let down the country at any moment. The Congress leaders themselves, he hoped, realised that there was no foundation for that suspicion.

The position of the Hindu Mahasabha, he continued, made not only the position of the Muslims difficult but also made that of the Congress difficult. So far as the Hindu Mahasabha was concerned, every pronouncement it made, or any course of action it adopted, was calculated to show to the Muslims that the Mahasabha was dominated by the one consideration—

the main consideration—that in India there should be complete supremacy and ascendancy of Hindus. When the Muslims realised that that was the attitude and mentality of the Hindu Mahasabha, their position became difficult. The Muslims naturally asked: "What is going to be our position in the future Government of India? When this great country gets self-government, are we to be under the rule of the Hindus?" How could they, therefore, expect the Muslims to join hands whole-heartedly with the Hindus and share in the struggle for freedom? Unless that mentality underwent a complete change, it would be very difficult indeed for the Hindus and Muslims to work whole-heartedly together.

Jinnah hoped the leaders of the Congress with their wider experience and very good training, would overcome that section and assure the Muslims that "it is not going to be a Hindu Government, but an Indian Government in which the Muslims will not only have a fair and just treatment but also that they will be treated as the equals of the Hindus." The Muslims were ready and willing to co-operate with the Hindus. The Muslims could not be forced to swerve from their path of doing what they considered right. They were not going to allow anyone to achieve supremacy and ascendancy; they were going to share in the government of

their own country. How far the Muslims would be able to maintain that position depended upon their own merits. Jinnah thought that the Muslims need not be in despair, provided they made the fullest use of their opportunities and remained united on every occasion. If that was done, then would win their goal.

On the 23rd of April he again sailed for England by s.s. *Conte Verde.*

CHAPTER XX

THE NEW CONSTITUTION

On the 24th of October, 1935, s.s. *Strathnaver* brought Mohammad Ali Jinnah back to the shores of his motherland to face fresh problems under changed conditions. The Government of India Act of 1935 had already been passed by the Parliament and immediately on his arrival an expectant crowd of pressmen awaited him to hear his advice for the benefit of an anxious country. The position of this great Muslim leader, as has been shown in the foregoing pages, was a unique one. Among the Musalmans he was an unrivalled leader. Among the Hindus he was admired for his patriotism and political sagacity even by his adversaries. Among the British he was known to be an advocate of reason and a champion of practical politics. But at the same time a section of Muslim opinion believed that his nationalistic views were not altogether serviceable to Muslim interests and that he was likely to give way under the persuasion of his Hindu friends. His advocacy for the acceptance of the Communal Award and his success in this regard in the Legislative Assembly had, on the other hand, alarmed his Hindu contemporaries. The British were also not

satisfied with him, as he has been criticising the new Act in very strong terms. Nevertheless he remained a source of dread to them. Jinnah's views, therefore, were eagerly awaited and he declared : " Of course, the Government of India Bill has now become an Act, and we all know that the new Constitution has been forced upon us. It is now the duty of the various leaders to put their heads together and chalk out a definite and common policy with regard to the Constitution which will shortly be inaugurated in normal course, at any rate in the Provinces."

The concluding period of the year 1935 was mainly spent by Mohammad Ali Jinnah in studying the political situation in India and he got into touch with Muslim leaders to ascertain their views. But the year 1936 started with increased activities for him. On the Legislative front he was busy in supporting and censuring the Government as the occasion, in his judgment, demanded. But he emphasised the need of a complete re-orientation of the Government's policy. For a detailed study of this the reader is referred to the records of the Assembly Debates. Particular attention is, however, invited to the debates on the Ottawa Agreement and the refusal of grants regarding the Executive Council and Defence. The results of these debates and his speeches on them brought added honour to Mohammad Ali Jinnah and

he was hailed as the greatest patriot in the country capable of independent judgment. Even the Hindu press showered unlimited praise on him. On the home front he was face to face with a terrific crisis in the shape of Shahidganj agitation in the Punjab. A dispute arose over a mosque which was believed to have belonged to Muslims and was now in possession of Sikhs. Punjab Muslims had put forward a claim for its restoration and the whole thing culminated in a movement of civil disobedience conducted by Muslims and a counter-movement conducted by Sikhs. The Government of the Punjab was very much vexed and the situation went almost out of control. In the opinion of Jinnah it was an unfortunate affair specially at a time when the whole energy of Musalmans was required to harness their strength for utilising what little opportunities were provided to India by the Act of 1935, and when he was called upon to settle the Shahidganj dispute he lost no time in proceeding to Lahore. There he laboured for a number of days talking and discussing the problem with the leaders of all the groups and communities.

Success crowned Jinnah's efforts to restore a peaceful atmosphere in the Muslim ranks as a preliminary to the restoration of communal harmony. While the Muslims endorsed and accepted his advice to stop

civil disobedience and confine the agitation to lawful means, Government on their part fully met the Muslims' demands as far as they concerned them. The Punjab Government decided to release all prisoners convicted of offences directly connected with the Shahidganj agitation, and not involving serious violence to person or property or abetment of such violence. They also decided to withdraw the pending cases falling within the same category. The Government further gave an undertaking that they would revoke action taken under the Indian Press Act where this action was directly in connection with the Shahidganj agitation. This followed a declaration by Jinnah in the Badshahi Mosque on behalf of all the sections of the Muslims that, after consultations with leaders, it had been decided that civil disobedience was to be stopped.

A *communique* in this connection recalled the Finance Member's statement in the Punjab Council on November 24, that if an understanding honourable to both communities were reached, and if, as a consequence, the danger to law and order were removed, the Local Government would at once respond by taking such measures as were within their power; and even if, within such an understanding, that agitation was dropped or assumed a constitutional form and the danger to law and order were removed, the Govern-

ment would take the same course. The *communique* referred to Jinnah's declaration in the Badshahi Mosque and said that in view of this statement Government had decided to release the Shahidganj prisoners and that action would be taken to give effect to this decision with the least possible delay.

Jinnah delivered his speech before a huge congregation at the Badshahi Mosque and said he had been in Lahore for some days during which he had the opportunity of exchanging views with Muslims of all schools of thought. He had reached the conclusion that civil disobedience should now be stopped, and that the agitation for the restoration of Shahidganj should be by legal and constitutional methods. He had been negotiating with the Sikhs, and wished to come to some honourable settlement with them. Jinnah assured them of his full support to a constitutional agitation, and concluded, "Now it is the duty of Government to announce a general amnesty to the Shahidganj prisoners."

Jinnah further said:

"While we are not going to give up our claim for Shahidganj, we are going to make every effort for an honourable understanding with the sister community. We shall seek all remedies by means of constitutional and peaceful methods, and there are

many avenues and channels open to us. There is no question of defiance to or intimidation of the sister community. They fought against us and we fought against them in the past, but the Sikhs are a great community, and nothing will please me more than an honourable settlement with them, and we shall spare no pains for this." Maulana Zafar Ali Khan and others endorsed his views.

When informed of the Government *communique* that was issued simultaneously, Mohammad Ali Jinnah declared :

> "The Governor and the Government of the Punjab have treated me during the few days that I have had the opportunity of discussing the question of Shahidganj with the utmost consideration and I am personally thankful to them for giving me all help and assistance."

In this congenial atmosphere, now created by him, Jinnah set his heart on the problem and began his work of reconciliation with renewed vigour. For more than a week he met the Muslim, Hindu and Sikh leaders and considered their views in order to find out a *via media* that would bring the two communities together. He met a great response from every party and brought about a considerable change in the situation for the better. But the work on hand was not so

easy as it seemed in the beginning and Jinnah could not stay more in Lahore in view of his other political engagements.

The Shahidganj dispute, therefore, remained, and Jinnah left for Delhi on the 7th March, 1936, leaving the unfinished work to the Shahidganj Conciliation Committee consisting of representatives of the three communities. In a statement to the press, Jinnah drew attention to the general change in the situation and the better atmosphere created. He stated that his conversations had clearly brought out on both sides that there was a genuine and sincere desire for an honourable understanding and settlement in the greater interests of the Punjab. He said: "Various suggestions and proposals have been made, but, as I said before, the question is more delicate than difficult because religious sentiments are deeply moved. In order to consider the various proposals and counter-proposals it is not only necessary to maintain a calm atmosphere but they require examination and adjustments so that other communities may be satisfied with the ultimate agreement that may be evolved. This is not a dispute between two individuals, but between two great communities, and it must take some time to ascertain the general wishes of the people." Jinnah added that he was, therefore, impelled to the conclusion that the purpose can best be served by constituting a Shahidganj

Conciliation Committee consisting of the following: Sir Mohammad Iqbal, Maulvi Abdul Qadir Qasuri, Mian Addul Aziz, Raja Narendranath, Nanakchand Pundit, Sardar But a Singh, Sardar Ujjal Singh and Sardar Sampuran Singh with Nawab Ahmad Yar Khan Daultana as convener. He hoped that the committee would do their utmost as intermediaries by approaching the leaders of the respective communities in order to find an agreed formula which may be acceptable to both the parties. "I wish," he concluded, "them godspeed, and I shall be glad to place my services at their disposal if and when they require it and also try to come to Lahore again if my presence is necessary. Meanwhile it is understood that the peaceful atmosphere already created will be maintained."

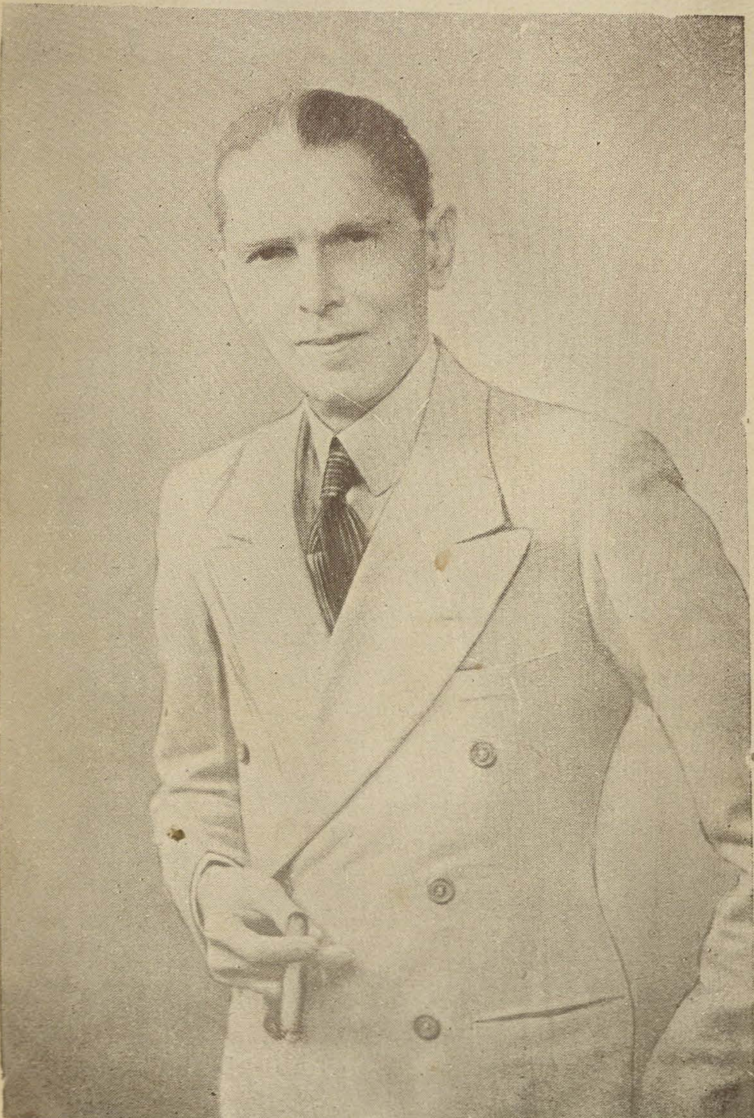
A tribute to Jinnah for his peace efforts and an appeal to the Sikhs to make a generous gesture were the features of the Governor's speech at the European section dinner on the same night. His Excellency reiterated that the existence of three great communities in the Punjab made it impossible for any one community to dominate over the others. If stability was to be secured, there had to be a large measure of co-operation and co-operation meant closer contacts, wider sympathies and better understanding.

Referring to the present hopeful situation His Excellency said:

"I am greatly indebted to the efforts of Mr. Jinnah for this improvement and I wish to pay an unqualified tribute to the work he has done and is doing. Mr. Jinnah succeeded in his first task, namely, bringing the Muslim agitation to strictly constitutional and legal lines, and thus made it possible for Government to take action for which they had been awaiting an opportunity. There remained the second part of his task. It is no secret that so far his efforts have not been crowned with success, but this does not mean that they have failed. His efforts continue, and in several respects they are being carried on in conditions far more favourable than when they began."

As regards the general situation in the country, Jinnah had to grapple with different problems altogether. The Congress point of view had to be considered in regard to the new Constitution. It had in the beginning adopted a peculiar attitude of postponing the expression of any opinion and there existed within itself several groups. The question of contesting the elections under the new Act hung in the balance for some time but ultimately the leaders decided in favour of sending to the provincial Assemblies their candidates. This brought Muslims face to

A POLITICIAN TO THE CORE



Mr. M. A. Jinnah

face with a new problem especially in view of the fact that Hindu opinion including that of the Congress leadership was openly antagonistic to the Communal Award. The Muslims had lost what little faith they had in the Congress and became a target of vigorous propaganda from the Hindu press. A vindication of the honour and prestige of Muslims was badly needed. Mohammad Ali Jinnah was in a position to do so, and he utilised the opportunity when he was invited to attend the Jamiat-ul-Ulema Conference held at Delhi in the beginning of April and explained the Muslim position with authority and confidence.

"The eighty million Muslims of India are willing and even more anxious than any other community to fight for the freedom of the Mother India, hand in hand with other sister communities," declared M. A. Jinnah in the course of a speech at the Conference. Nearly ten thousand Muslims were present and his speech was heard with rapt attention. Asaf Ali translated the speech into Urdu. A very warm welcome was accorded to Jinnah by the audience amidst shouts of "Allah-o-Akbar". He spoke for about half an hour explaining the "Policy for Muslims". He said that Muslims who were not a negligible community had to play a very prominent part in the near future. The new Reforms and, especially, the scheme of Federation were not

acceptable to them. The Government had foisted these Reforms against the will of all parties, because Indians were not united and they failed to settle their domestic quarrels. Still, he announced, the Muslims were ready to march along in the fight for freedom of their country. He continued that he was called a communalist because he wanted safeguards for his community. It was not a religious problem, but was a purely political problem. Such questions arose even among Protestants and Roman Catholics who belonged to the same religion, namely, Christianity.

He pointed out that it was for the first time that a Representative Government was being established in India and this meant, in other words, the rule of the majority, and naturally minorities had apprehensions as to what the majority would do. Majorities were likely to be tyrannical. Power and authority were likely to intoxicate people; therefore provisions for safeguards were essential for the minorities in any scheme of a democratic constitution. He referred to the Communal Award at length and asked the Hindus to forget it for some time. He asked: "Are we going to move on and apply our minds to larger questions affecting India? Close the controversy over the Communal Award for the time being, and, God willing, we would produce a better settlement." Even the Law Member, said Jinnah, who was one of the

greatest opponents of the Communal Award, had told the Hindus that the question was not only dead but cremated and its ashes thrown in the Ganges. Jinnah added: "Let us get back, we will settle this question sooner or later. No Constitution is permanent. Constitutions are made by men but men are not made by Constitutions."

Jinnah reiterated his strong views against the Federal scheme and said that it was worse than the present scheme and its potential harm and mischief were so great and it was fundamentally so bad that it could be acceptable to no true Indian and "we will fight until we have that replaced by a Constitution which, we think, is the right one." Referring, however, to the future step for Muslims, he said: "We must think of the interests of our community. Unless you make the best efforts, you will fail and will command no respect and nobody will bother to consult you. Organise yourselves and play your part." He added that there was nothing wrong in working for one's own community. It had become a fashion to decry persons serving their own community as 'communalists', but he was not afraid of being called a communalist, because he helped his community. Jinnah declared: "The Hindus and Muslims must be organised separately and once when they are both organised they will understand each other better and then we will not have

to wait for years for an understanding. Do not listen to the taunts. I am helping 80 million people and if they are more organised they will be all the more useful for the national struggle."

Mohammad Ali Jinnah wanted Hindus also to be similarly organised. He appealed to Muslims to select the best men for the new Reforms and leave it to them to work as they pleased. He appealed to the Hindus to inspire confidence and a sense of security among the Muslims. He said, the Muslims of Abyssinia had proved that, though in a minority, they could equally fight with guns for their mother country. "Do you think we Muslims would lag behind the cause of freedom of our motherland?"

Soon after this the All-India Muslim League was assembled at Bombay under the presidentship of Sir Syed Wazir Hasan to formulate a policy for Muslims. The Congress simultaneously held its sessions at Lucknow. But while the Congress postponed its decision in regard to office acceptance, the League took a definite lead.

Mohammad Ali Jinnah moved the following resolution:

"The All-India Muslim League enters its emphatic protest against forcing the Constitu-

tion, as embodied in the Government of India Act of 1935, upon the people of India, against their will and, in spite of the repeated disapproval and dissent expressed by various parties and bodies in the country. The League considers that, having regard to the conditions prevailing at present in the country, the Provincial scheme of the Constitution be utilised for what it is worth, in spite of the most objectionable feature contained therein, which render the real control and responsibility of the Ministry and the Legislature over the entire field of Government and the Administration nugatory. The League is clearly of the opinion that the All-India Federal Scheme of the Central Government, embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935, is fundamentally bad; it is most reactionary, retrograde, injurious and fatal to the vital interests of British India *vis-a-vis* the Indian States, and it is calculated to thwart and delay indefinitely the realisation of India's most cherished goal of complete responsible Government and is totally unacceptable.

"The League considers that the British Parliament should still take the earliest opportunity to review the whole situation afresh regarding the Central scheme before it is inaugurated ; or else the League feels convinced that the present scheme will not bring peace and contentment to the people, but on the contrary it will lead to disaster if forced upon

and persisted in as it is entirely unworkable in the interests of India and her people."

During the course of his speech Mohammad Ali Jinnah expressed his view that it was unnecessary to go into the long history of the Government of India Act, but he briefly summarised what the demands of the people of India were and when they began to be made. The real issues came to the forefront in 1924, if not earlier, when provincial autonomy was taken for granted already at that time. Lord Reading was willing to call the leaders of India and come to a settlement with them. In 1924, therefore, the question of provincial autonomy did not trouble the leaders. Then came the Muddiman Committee in 1925, when it was again known that the Government would grant a Provincial autonomy scheme but it was not the Provincial autonomy that the people of India were fighting for. The main issue was about the control and responsibility in the Central Government. That meant control and responsibility in the important departments of the State which should be managed by Ministers responsible to the Legislature. There was the question of Defence. Unless the people of India had defence in their hands, unless they had the sword in their hands to defend their homes and hearths, they could not be expected legitimately to fill their place in the comity of nations.

As regards Finance, any one would appreciate that without money one could do nothing. So was the case about Commerce and Industry. These were some of the important departments, though there were many other departments in the present Government. Consider, for instance, that the Law and Order Department was more vital than any one else. They therefore fought for control and responsibility in the vital departments. What did the country get in the new Constitution? Jinnah challenged any one to contradict his statement that India got 2 per cent responsibility and 98 per cent safeguards plus special powers to the Governor-General. It was not only that. It was most remarkable that this 2 per cent of responsibility was hampered and hedged in, in several ways. Firstly, one-third of the number of members in the Assembly of the First House would be the nominees of the Indian Princes. Then there were in British India certain conservative elements. There was large representation to the Europeans. The Constitution was expressly so designed, Jinnah observed, that leaving alone extremists and socialists, the programme of even moderate nationalist Indians of advanced ideas would never go through the First House. If, however, by a miracle or manoeuvre any measure went through the First House, there was the equally powerful Second House, where the representation for the Princes was 40 per cent responsible to none, not even to the sub-

jects of the States. That was so far as the composition of the Legislature was concerned. If a measure went through these two Houses, there was the Governor-General. Jinnah did not think that anywhere in the whole world there was any person who exercised such powers. He was therefore justified in protesting against the Constitution being forced on the country.

Mohammad Ali Jinnah then referred to the situation as regards India. There were, he said, four major parties sitting, as it were, at a chess-board. There were the British people as a collective entity. There were the Indian Princes, the Hindus and Muslims. The object of Great Britain was to maintain, inviolable and intact, the power and authority of Great Britain, as a dominant party that must maintain its *Raj* in India. The object of the Indian Princes was that they did not want any kind of democratic government. They seemed to think that if the British Government might hand over certain powers to the people of British India, would it not be better that the Princes should come in to keep a control over any such power given to the people of British India ? The object of the Hindus and Muslims was common to a certain extent. The Muslims were anxious, declared Jinnah, and were as ready as any Hindu nationalist, to stand by the country and struggle for her freedom. But this was the first time the people were trying

a Constitution by which the Government was carried on by a majority rule and the Muslims were a minority community. It was not a religious question. It was a question whether they should not have sufficient safeguards which would inspire confidence in them, so that they too could whole-heartedly join with the sister communities in the march for freedom. Unfortunately, he said, there was no agreement between the Hindus and Muslims on this question.

The fact thus remained that the people of India were not united as yet, and could not present a united front. Mere resolutions did not impress the British Government. Le ving alone the people of India as a whole, there was no unity among Muslims themselves. The same thing applied to the Hindus, although they were more advanced, educationally and economically. Among them were the Nationalist Party, the Hindu Mahasabha, the Liberal Federation and various other organisations. When that was the position, it was impossible to bend the British Government to listen to the demands of the Indian people. Was there any community in India which followed one leader?

Whether at the Round Table Conference or in India, the Indians had been quarrelling among themselves like the two cats which, unable to arrive at a settlement, went to a

monkey for justice with the result that the monkey took away the whole cheese! It was true that despite any resolution of protest which might be passed they would remain in a helpless condition. But surely one could at least express one's opinion that the new Constitution was a fraud being imposed upon them. One could express one's "resentment against the fraud that is being perpetrated" and one could ask others to do it. A question might be asked as to whether protests would be of any avail when the Constitution was coming into operation. The answer was "What did Germany do with the Treaty of Versailles which was forced on her?" Did she not sign the Treaty? Here in India there was no question of anybody having to sign. The Constitution was forced upon the country, and it was going to be the law of the land. Every one knew, and the British Government knew, that the Constitution had been the grossest breach of faith on the part of the British Government who had stated that they would not announce any constitution which did not receive an adequate amount of support. The question was whether there had been any agreement at all. Nevertheless, it was being pointed out that there was a large measure of agreement in the Conservative Party and that was enough.

"If I have to submit to it," said Mohammad Ali Jinnah, "I shall submit to it under protest. I shall see what use I can make

of it. The German nation, when it was forced to sign the Treaty of Versailles, signed it. If I have to deal with this Constitution as the Germans dealt with the Versailles Treaty, I shall begin by tearing off as many pages as the Government of India Act has, and we shall not rest content until that Constitution is replaced by a Constitution which is acceptable to us."

Proceeding, Jinnah congratulated the President on the manner in which he had analysed the present situation and agreed with him that the only way left open to them was constitutional agitation. It was a comprehensive term, and meant that they should work the legislatures with a view to creating such forces within and without the legislatures as would make the British Government bend to their wishes. But that, said he, was not a task which the Muslims alone could accomplish. It could be done only by the two major communities standing shoulder to shoulder and working together. Unfortunately, however, "the largest organisation", the Indian National Congress, was behaving like an ostrich, putting its head in the sand and thinking that nobody was observing it. The Congress claimed to represent the entire nation and stated that it did not care about individual communities. The Congress attitude was: "If you like to come with us, you may; or stay away, if you choose. We will remain neutral and we are

marching towards our goal." It was wrong to adopt such an attitude. "I venture to say, that the Congress will never reach the goal they desire and we desire unless they appeal to the Muslims." If the Congress wanted to prolong the British domination in India, then let it continue its present policy. So far as the Muslims were concerned, Jinnah stated, they owed not only a duty to the community but also to the country. Whether the Congress wanted them to join that body or not, they should organise themselves and compel the Congress to approach them for co-operation. He believed that if 80 million of Musalmans could unite, the Muslims could arrive at a settlement with the Hindus as two nations, if not as partners.

The League also set up a machinery as to how the elections had to be contested.

A resolution authorising Mohammad Ali Jinnah to form a Central Election Board consisting of not less than 35 members with powers to constitute and affiliate provincial election boards in the various provinces was moved by Raja Ghazanfar Ali Khan. The resolution stated:

"Whereas the Parliamentary system of Government which is being introduced in this country with the inauguration of the new Constitution presupposes the formation of

parties with a well-defined policy and programme which facilitate the education of the electorate, and co-operation between groups with proximate aims and ideals and ensures the working of the Constitution to the best advantage; and whereas in order to strengthen the solidarity of the Muslim community and to secure for the Muslims their proper and effective share in the provincial Governments, it is essential that the Muslims should organise themselves as one party, with an advanced and progressive programme, it is hereby resolved that the All-India Muslim League do take steps to contest the approaching provincial elections, and for this purpose appoint Mr. Jinnah to form a central election board under his presidentship, consisting of not less than 35 members, with powers to constitute and affiliate provincial election boards in various provinces, having regard to the condition of each province, and devise ways and means for carrying out the aforesaid objects."

Towards the end of April, Lord Linlithgow came out to India to assume the charge of Viceroyalty and broadcast a message to India. Lord Linlithgow's pronouncement contained nothing more than the usual denials and promises, hopes and fears, threats and assurances that Viceregal announcements generally contain, but emphasis on the need of working the new Constitution and its

justification as a measure of political advance for India was likely to be misunderstood in view of the Muslims' decision at Bombay. Jinnah felt the need of making the Muslim position clear and issued the following statement:

"I have seen the report of the speech of His Excellency the Governor-General of India," said Mohammad Ali Jinnah. "I do not wish to deal with the parts referring to the Indian Civil Service, the Police and the problem of unemployment. It is partly the usual appreciation of service and encouragement. It is from the head of the Government, and the expression of sympathy towards the unemployed in India. But what is of real importance to the people of India, the immediate issue, is law and order, the so-called provincial autonomy and the contemplated All-India Federation at the Centre. With regard to law and order, I would respectfully draw the attention of His Excellency that he must look to the causes, which disturb law and order, and not take it for granted that suddenly large classes of people in India have become criminals and therefore the ordinary judicial procedure should be departed from and that the only method of dealing with it is by repressive measures, executive orders and detention of people without trial.

"As I have often said, the factors which

threaten law and order in India are mainly due to the policy that has been adopted by the British Government in India for the last ten years. Even now it is surprising that His Excellency forgets altogether the history of the last ten years, and he quietly takes it for granted that the people should accept the provincial scheme laid down by the Government of India Act of 1935, and to put it in his language, 'whose natural crown and summit will be the All-India Federation' as now prescribed in the same Statute. Surely, His Excellency must have some information that the scheme of so-called provincial autonomy is not acceptable to the people, and that the natural crown of All-India Federation has been totally condemned by every section of public opinion. His pronouncement amounts to this: That the British Parliament has forced the Constitution upon India, and therefore, we must accept it."

Quoting the Viceroy's words: "Now that this matter is no longer in issue and the new Constitution is upon the Statute Book, I call upon you to banish doubt and to eschew half-heartedness and with me and the Governors of your Provinces to go forward in faith and courage to put into effect and to make to work this body of Reforms which, with your help, has been shaped by the joint wisdom of Britain and India after labours which, for care and scope, have in matters of the kind no

parallel in the history of the world." Mohammad Ali Jinnah remarked, "I must take exception to this and must say that the Government of India Act is a result brought about not with the help of India. It was enacted in the teeth of the opposition of India and contrary to the solemn declaration made by His Majesty's Government before the first Round Table Conference that only those proposals which received the greatest common measure of agreement of the people of India would be placed before Parliament. It is not a question of doubts nor half-heartedness. It is not a question of this or that element in the plan of constitutional difference of basic principles with regard to the central scheme. And the opposition to the provincial scheme is the most highly objectionable features which render real autonomy nugatory. I hope His Excellency will not follow the usual definition of co-operation and goodwill, namely, 'submit and do as we tell you.' That is not my idea of co-operation. There cannot be the real respect and trust that His Excellency desires unless India is treated on a footing of complete equality and on the basis of true partnership as a member of the British Commonwealth."

To carry out the behests of the League and to set up effective machinery for fighting out the elections was no easy task specially at this juncture. Muslim politics were passing

through a difficult period and the Muslim mind was being swayed either in an atmosphere of vague idealism or under the influence of some party or other. With no definite goal before them the Musalmans were either supporting the administrations in measures of public welfare or siding with the Congress in its struggle for supremacy. The Musalmans behaved according to their light in different parts of India, but in both cases they remained nothing more than the henchmen of the parties towards which they had natural leanings. There was no central policy and no central control. Mohammad Ali Jinnah was open to attack from both of them, either because of his attitude towards the Federation and Reforms or on account of his support to the Communal Award. He, however, started his work and undertook an extensive tour of the country to contact influential leaders so that he could hope for a fairly good success at the polls for the League. It was, therefore, natural that at first wherever he went he found that Musalmans were planning on a provincial basis and the parties they had built up, more particularly in the Muslim Majority Provinces, bore the colour of the particular influence under which they had found themselves. A few of the Muslim leaders from the Muslim Minority Provinces remained independent in their thought and action, or, to be more correct, wavered in atmosphere of uncertainty. It was therefore

in the Minority Provinces that the real strength of Musalmans and the League rested.

In the Punjab Mian Sir Fazl-i-Husain had built up a Unionist Party. In Bengal a Krishak Proja Party functioned under Maulvi Fazlul Haq. In U. P. the Nationalist Agricultural Party was a creation of the leadership of Nawab of Chhatari. In Sind Sir Abdulla Haroon refused to join hands with the League. In Bihar Syed Abdul Aziz followed suit. In the North-West Frontier Province the Congress forces under Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan and his celebrated brother were loose. But in the midst of all this darkness there shone a flickering light in Lahore; he was the only consolation of Jinnah. A great philosopher, whom India never bothered to claim, and whom Muslims learnt to appreciate when he was already gone never to return, was keeping Jinnah advised as to how an independent Muslim was thinking and should have thought.

In June 1936, Jinnah called the first meeting of the Parliamentary Board at Lahore and there he received the following letter from Iqbal: "I am sending you my draft. Also a cutting from the *Eastern Times* of yesterday. This is a letter from an intelligent pleader of Gurdaspur. I hope the statement issued by the Board will fully argue the whole scheme and will meet all the objections so

far advanced against it. It must frankly state the present position of the Indian Muslims as regards both the Government and the Hindus. It must warn the Muslims of India that unless the present scheme is adopted the Muslims will lose all that they have gained during the last 15 years and will seriously harm, and in fact, shatter their own solidarity with their own hands." And in a postscript Iqbal wrote : " Will feel much obliged if you send the statement to me before it is sent to the press. Another point which should be brought out in the statement is as follows :

" 1. Indirect election to the Central Assembly has made it absolutely essential that the Muslim representatives returned to the Provincial Assemblies should be bound by an All India Muslim policy and programme so that they should return to the Central Assembly only those Muslims who would be pledged to support the specific Muslim questions connected with the Central subjects and arising out of their position as the second great nation of India. Those who are now for Provincial policies and programmes were themselves instrumental in getting indirect elections for the Central Assembly introduced into the Constitution obviously because this suited a foreign Government. Now when the community wants to make the best use of this misfortune (*i.e.*, indirect elections) by proposing an All-India scheme of

elections (*e.g.*, League scheme) to be adhered to by the Provincial candidates, the same men, again at the instance of a foreign Government, have come out to defeat the community in their efforts to retain its solidarity as a nation.

"2. Question of Wakf Law arising out of Shahidganj, culture, language, mosques and personal law."

The Parliamentary Board met and issued a lengthy statement and outlined a definite policy and programme for the legislators that were to be elected on the League tickets. Mohammad Ali Jinnah then proceeded to supervise the work of the Board and constitute the provincial branches. His work in the provincial field, though wrought with serious obstacles, as has been pointed out above, was on the whole satisfactory and he accomplished a great deal more than could be expected from him under the circumstances. Under these arrangements and in this atmosphere the elections were contested and the League achieved a success which bewildered its own workers. But this remarkable success was by no means one that could place the League and its leaders in a position to dictate terms to other parties. The Congress had also returned in a thumping majority, as it had tremendous influence among the Hindus.

CHAPTER XXI

THE CLASH

The year 1937 opened with little change in the attitude of the Hinduised Congress which continued in its airs of superiority. It had not yet decided to accept office. The All-India Muslim League was nevertheless hoping that the Hindus would work the Reforms and the League was willing to co-operate with them. Jinnah had given this indication both in private and in public. But the Congress leaders became obsessed with the idea that they could ignore the League altogether and arrogate power for the Hindu majority. The tactics of avoiding the League, it seems, was actuated by a motive of giving a suitable reply to the protagonists of the Communal Award and to those who were responsible of its acceptance in India. This was in fact a personal affront to Mohammad Ali Jinnah. Fortunately for the Musalmans and unfortunately for the Hindus the leadership of the Congress was at the time in the hands of Jawaharlal Nehru, the Westernised Shankaracharya, and he declared in Calcutta that the parties that mattered in India were the Congress and the British and that others should line up implying thereby that the working or the wrecking of the new Constitu-

tion rested in the hands of the Congress alone. It was a threat to the British and a reproach to the League. The Congress had now come out openly to contest the Muslim seats in opposition to the League and flout the Musalmans.

Such a sweeping claim could, naturally, not go unchallenged. Jinnah at the time was in Calcutta. A public meeting was called in his honour and he utilised the opportunity to warn the Congress that interference with Muslim affairs would mean complete disaster. Replying to the statement of Jawaharlal Nehru he said, "There is a third party, namely the Musalmans. We are not going to be dictated to by anybody. We are willing to co-operate with any group of a progressive and independent character provided its programme and policy correspond to our own. We are not going to be camp followers of any party. We are ready to work as equal partners for the welfare of India."

In the third week of March the Congress President called a National Convention at Delhi with a view to obtaining the "verdict of the country" over the question of office acceptance. Mohammad Ali Jinnah explained, on the eve of this Convention, the position of the League in the hope that better counsels may after all prevail with the leaders of the Congress. In a statement to the press he said:

"We have decided to contest the seat which was won by the Muslim League at Bahraich, but the member who won the seat, I sorrowfully have to say, is no more with us. So we have to capture that seat again. The Congress, I believe, is going to contest the seat. It will be a great mistake on the part of the Congress to do so. There is really no substantial difference now at any rate between the League and the Congress as plan of the wrecking of the Constitution has disappeared from the Congress programme. I have often said that I am trying to see that Muslims should whole-heartedly and sincerely adhere to the policy and programme of the All-India Muslim League, which is both national and patriotic, and we shall always be glad to co-operate with the Congress in their constructive programme. It is no use encouraging individual Muslims to come into the fold of the Congress for the sake of a prize. In conclusion I say: Let us now concentrate on those causes which stand in the way of a united front." But the Congress President went ahead, full speed, in the direction in which he was careering. In his presidential address he dwelt at length misrepresenting Muslim politics and made an attempt to explain the reasons why the Congress had hitherto failed to enlist Muslim sympathies. One of the principal reasons, in his opinion, was that the Congress had neglected the Muslims so far. A Muslim Mass Contact scheme was, therefore, chalked out and

free expression was given to the opinion that the Muslim leadership was not up to the mark and patriotism was a virtue that could not be expected from them. This was too much, yet Mohammad Ali Jinnah preferred to give the Congress a long rope and kept quiet. But Iqbal was very much disturbed by this pronouncement and wrote to Jinnah : " I suppose you have read Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru's address to the All-India National Convention and that you fully realise the policy underlying it in so far as Indian Muslims are concerned. I believe you are also aware that the new Constitution has at least brought a unique opportunity to Indian Muslims for self-organisation in view of the future political developments both in India and Muslim Asia. While we are ready to co-operate with other Progressive Parties in the country, we must not ignore the fact that the whole future of Islam as a moral and political force in Asia rests very largely on a complete organisation of Indian Muslims. I therefore suggest that an effective reply should be given to the All-India National Convention. You should immediately hold an All-India Muslim Convention in Delhi to which you should invite members of the new Provincial Assemblies as well as other prominent Muslim leaders. To this Convention you must restate as clearly and as strongly as possible the political objective of the Indian Muslims as a distinct political unit in the country. It is absolutely necessary to tell the world both inside and outside India

that the economic problem is not the only problem in the country. From the Muslim point of view the cultural problem is of much greater consequence to most Indian Muslims. At any rate, it is not less important than the economic problem. If you could hold this Convention, it would test the credentials of those Muslim legislators who have formed parties contrary to the aims and aspirations of Indian Muslims. It would further make it clear to the Hindus that no political device, however subtle, can make the Indian Muslim lose sight of his cultural entity."

Soon after this, all the other forces of the Congress were also let loose and a volley of attacks was opened on the Muslim leader. On the 20th April 1937, Jinnah issued a press statement in reply to Rajendra Prasad who had started a controversy about the unity talks he had had with Jinnah some time ago and of which the reader is well aware. Jinnah said: " What surprises me most is Babu Rajendra Prasad's satisfaction. He says that the Muslims of Bihar joined the *hartal* demonstration on April 1, in spite of my opinion to the contrary, but I think Babu Rajendra Prasad knows that my expression of opinion was not followed up by any organised effort. Does he want me to make such an effort in future? Besides, with his experience as a practical man, does he not realise that Muslims love any demonstration or *tamasha* and always enjoy excitement?

But, is this all that he can say of the co-operation and support of Muslims? I am afraid he has grievously misunderstood the Muslims." The controversy developed at great length and went on till the end of July. Rajendra Prasad, forgetting the history of recent years, continued to accuse Jinnah of his unwillingness to tackle the problem of Hindu-Muslim unity. By the end of July the Muslim leader, therefore, had to make the following revelation in a statement: "I assure the Musalmans and the public at large that I am not in the slightest degree affected by anything that has happened in the past, and nobody will welcome an honourable settlement between the Hindus and the Musalmans more that I, and nobody will be so ready to help it, and as an earnest on my part I sent a message to Mr. Gandhi when he was at Tithal only in the month of May last appealing to him to take up the question of Hindu-Muslim settlement and concentrate his great influence and efforts to which I received the following reply on May 22, 1937: 'Dear Mr. Jinnah, Kher has given me your message. I wish I could do something but I am utterly helpless. My faith in unity is bright as ever; only I see no daylight out of the impenetrable darkness and in such distress I cry out to God for light. Yours sincerely, M. K. Gandhi."

It is clear, therefore, from the foregoing facts that in spite of the Congress leaders'

attitude towards the League and their strong attack on the Muslim leader, Mohammad Ali Jinnah had hardly been deviated from his path of making attempt after attempt for bringing the two sections of Indian population nearer to each other, and as a paper commented he was never tired of seeking Hindu-Muslim settlement. Throughout his public career Jinnah's record of public service is full of these attempts and as late as July 1937 he was hoping that at least a working arrangement between the Congress on the one part and the League on the other would be brought about. But the Congress under the guidance of Gandhi, who had not failed to raise a great fuss over the so-called special powers of the Governors of provinces in his usual manner, had decided to accept office and to form the ministries, even without the assurances from the Governors asked for by him that they would not use these powers. The Congress decision was put into effect almost immediately and the Congress High Command proceeded to form monopolist ministries without taking any heed of the hand of co-operation extended by other parties. Jinnah's hope for a working settlement was thus shattered once for all.

It was clear now that unless the Musalmans made their existence felt, unless they organised themselves into a power, unless they had a united platform and clear programme before them, it would be difficult for them to

continue their independent existence for which they had been fighting so long and for which they had earned taunts and reproaches from the Hindus over the Communal Award. It was also clear that if the Congress was to be allowed to carry on its normal activities, the effect and spirit of the Award, without which Muslims did not feel secure, would be nullified, and perhaps in any future scheme of Constitution their existence as a separate entity would be entirely blotted out. The League session was to be held shortly and it was expected that the organisation would be completely overhauled. A complete re-orientation of its policy was the need of the occasion. Iqbal was in continuous private correspondence with the League leader and was influencing his views which were fast becoming more and more confirmed in the light of his own experiences and observations. "I am glad to hear," wrote the Muslim Poet, "that you will bear in mind what I wrote to you about the changes in the constitution and programme of the League. I have no doubt that you fully realise the gravity of the situation as far as Muslim India is concerned. The League will have to finally decide whether it will remain a body representing the upper classes of Indian Muslims or Muslim masses who have so far, with good reason, taken no interest in it. Personally, I believe that a political organisation which gives no promise of

improving the lot of the average Muslim cannot attract our masses.

" Under the new Constitution the higher posts go to the sons of upper classes; the smaller ones go to the friends or relatives of the ministers. In other matters too, our political institutions have never thought of improving the lot of Muslims generally. The problem of bread is becoming more and more acute. The Muslim has begun to feel that he has been going down and down during the last 200 years. Ordinarily he believes that his poverty is due to Hindu money-lending or capitalism. The perception that it is equally due to foreign rule has not yet fully come to him. But it is bound to come. The atheistic socialism of Jawaharlal is not likely to receive much response from the Muslims. The question therefore is: how is it possible to solve the problem of Muslim poverty? And the whole future of the League depends on the League's activity to solve this question. If the League can give no such promises I am sure the Muslim masses will remain indifferent to it as before. Happily there is a solution in the enforcement of the Law of Islam and its further development in the light of modern ideas. After a long and careful study of Islamic Law I have come to the conclusion that if this system of Law is properly understood and applied, at least the right to subsistence is secured to everybody.

But the endorsement and development of the Shariat of Islam is impossible in this country without a free Muslim state or states. This has been my honest conviction for many years and I still believe this to be the only way to solve the problem of bread for Muslims as well as to secure a peaceful India. If such a thing is impossible in India the only other alternative is a civil war which as a matter of fact has been going on for some time in the shape of Hindu-Muslim riots. I fear that in certain parts of the country, *i.e.*, North-West India, Palestine may be repeated. Also the insertion of Jawaharlal's socialism into the body politic of Hinduism is likely to cause much bloodshed among the Hindus themselves. The issue between social democracy and Brahminism is not dissimilar to the one between Brahminism and Budhism. Whether the fate of socialism will be the same as the fate of Budhism in India I cannot say. But it is clear to my mind that if Hinduism accepts social democracy it must necessarily cease to be Hinduism. For Islam the acceptance of social democracy in some suitable form and consistent with the legal principles of Islam is not a revolution but a return to the original purity of Islam. The modern problems, therefore, are far more easy to solve for the Muslims than for the Hindus. But as I have said above, in order to make it possible for Muslim India to solve these problems, it is necessary to redistribute the

country and to provide one or more Muslim states with absolute majorities. Don't you think that the time for such a demand has already arrived? Perhaps this is the best reply you can give to the atheistic socialism of Jawaharlal Nehru.

"Anyhow I have given you my own thoughts in the hope that you will give them serious consideration either in your address or in the discussions of the coming session of the League. Muslim India hopes that at this serious juncture your genius will discover some way out of our present difficulties."

"I know you are a busy man," wrote the Poet in another letter, "but I do hope you won't mind my writing to you so often, as you are the only Muslim in India today to whom the community has a right to look up for safe guidance through the storm which is coming to North-West India, and perhaps to the whole of India. I tell you that we are actually living in a state of civil war which, but for the police and military, would become universal in no time. During the last few months there has been a series of Hindu-Muslim riots in India. In North-West India alone there have been at least three riots during the last three months and at least four cases of vilification of the Prophet by Hindus and Sikhs. In each of these four cases, the vilifier has been murdered. There have also

been cases of burning of the Quran in Sind. I have carefully studied the whole situation and believe that the real cause of these events is neither religious nor economic. It is purely political, *i.e.*, the desire of the Sikhs and Hindus to intimidate Muslims even in the Muslim majority provinces. And the new Constitution is such that even in the Muslim majority provinces, the Muslims are made entirely dependent on non-Muslims. The result is that the Muslim Ministry can take no proper action and are even driven to do injustice to Muslims partly to please those on whom they depend, and partly to show that they are absolutely impartial. Thus it is clear that we have our specific reasons to reject this Constitution. It seems to me that the new Constitution is devised only to placate the Hindus. In the Hindu majority provinces, the Hindus have of course absolute majorities, and can ignore Muslims altogether. In Muslim majority provinces, the Muslims are made entirely dependent on Hindus. I have no doubt in my mind that this Constitution is calculated to do infinite harm to the Indian Muslims. Apart from this it is no solution of the economic problem which is so acute among Muslims.

"The only thing that the Communal Award grants to Muslims is the recognition of their political existence in India. But such a recognition granted to a people whom this

constitution does not and cannot help in solving their problem of poverty can be of no value to them. The Congress President has denied the political existence of Muslims in no unmistakable terms. The other Hindu political body, i.e., the Mahasabha, whom I regard as the real representative of the masses of the Hindus, has declared more than once that a united Hindu-Muslim nation is impossible in India. In these circumstances it is obvious that the only way to a peaceful India is a redistribution of the country on the lines of racial, religious and linguistic affinities. Many British statesmen also realise this, and the Hindu-Muslim riots which are rapidly coming in the wake of this Constitution are sure further to open their eyes to the real situation in the country. I remember Lord Lothian told me before I left England, that my scheme was the only possible solution of the troubles of India, but that it would take 25 years to come. Some Muslims in the Punjab are already suggesting the holding of a North-West Indian Muslim Conference, and the idea is rapidly spreading. I agree with you, however, that our community is not yet sufficiently organised and disciplined, and perhaps the time for holding such a conference is not yet ripe. But I feel that it would be highly advisable for you to indicate in your address at least the line of action that the Muslims of North-West India would be finally driven to take.

"To my mind the new Constitution with its idea of a single Indian Federation is completely hopeless. A separate Federation of Muslim provinces, reformed on the lines I have suggested above, is the only course by which we can secure a peaceful India and save Muslims from the domination of non-Muslims. Why should not the Muslims of North-West India and Bengal be considered as nations entitled to self-determination just as other nations in India and outside India are?

"Personally I think that the Muslims of North-West India and Bengal ought at present to ignore Muslim minority provinces. This is the best course to adopt in the interest of both Muslim majority and minority provinces. It will therefore be better to hold the coming session of the League in the Punjab, and not in a Muslim minority province. The month of August is bad in Lahore. I think you should seriously consider the advisability of holding the coming session at Lahore in the middle of October when the weather is quite good in Lahore. The interest in the All-India Muslim League is rapidly growing in the Punjab, and the holding of the coming session in Lahore is likely to give a fresh political awakening to the Punjab Muslims."

The letters of Iqbal quoted above have already been broadcast in print by the publishers of this book. They deserve to be better

known. They have been quoted here with a view to explaining their importance with a background of the times in which they were written, and the influence they have exercised on the mind of Mohammad Ali Jinnah.

The Congress had now been in power for some time and Muslims were seriously thinking as to what should be their policy. Since the acceptance of office by the Congress the Muslims felt themselves not in a position to indict Hindus with proofs of communal outlook and yet to all intents and purposes they felt that they were not welcome in Hindu circles. The only hope, therefore, was in the forthcomig session of the League which came in October 1937 at Lucknow. Mohammad Ali Jinnah's position at this juncture was of great responsibility and the League's fate was hanging in the balance. Muslims were earnestly looking towards him as most of their other leaders had completely betrayed their cause. Punjab, Bengal, North-West Frontier Province, Sind, the United Provinces and other provinces were left only with a few men loyal to Muslim interest. Others were either already in ministerial parties or hankering after them, playing the tune of Hindu Congressmen in power. The Muslim Majority Provinces, although not altogether at the mercy of the Congress, were nevertheless much too afraid of their British masters. The rumour goes

that Mohammad Ali Jinnah tried his best to hold the League session in one of these provinces, as Iqbal was constantly pressing him, but the Muslim leaders in office would not agree to it and the annual League had to be postponed from month to month. At last Jinnah accepted the long-standing invitation of the Raja of Mahmudabad to summon the League session at Lucknow. The author was then present there. Muslims had no volunteer organisations and students were not willing to jeopardise their future by dabbling in " communal politics " and thought they were above "narrow-minded" considerations of this sort. But Muslims in general were groaning under a state of helplessness. They had lost all faith with those in power and those who stood by them had no wings to fly. In the past they had neglected their own affairs and had no organisation that could come to their rescue.

It was about three weeks before the League session that we were told to make all necessary arrangements for the purpose. There was a talk in the town that some "broaded-minded" Muslims would throw in all their weight to create disturbance during the League sessions, and it was feared that the Pandal pavilion would be burnt to ashes before the League could make use of it. The Congress Government in the United Provinces had foreshadowed trouble and Muslims were

not willing to accept help from the police. All vigilance and maintenance of peace and order had to be done by us. It meant hard labour for us all and for one week we knew neither rest nor sleep. Day and night we were at the post of duty, alert and active. At last the day came when Mohammad Ali Jinnah arrived. His procession was to be taken out through the streets of Lucknow in spite of all the threatened trouble. The processionists knew that there was a rumour of throwing bombs over the crowd and the League President, and that arrangements were made by a few individuals to stage a demonstration with black flags. But our workers were ready for all these contingencies. We were all working under a sort of a frenzy and nothing seemed to deter us.

Jinnah's procession was a wonderful pageant. The vanguard was a train of young men dressed in green uniforms. Then came the huge crowd of men that had foregathered from the villages and insisted on being included in the procession. The League President was seated in a well-decorated open car. The Raja of Mahmudabad walked on foot in front of the presidential carriage. It took us four hours to reach our destination at Kaiserbagh where Jinnah was to stay. On the way we met with the expected demonstration. A few pieces of black cloth were seen at a distance. Our young men got wild, and

had it not been for our local leaders who controlled the situation, there would have ensued a terrible skirmish among the two parties. But the demonstrators took to their heels very soon and once again calmness prevailed in our ranks.

The League session began with the unfurling of Muslim flag. It was for the first time that the flag figured in the programme of the League. The ceremony was performed by Jinnah himself and we felt his greatness within ourselves. Mulana Zafar Ali Khan delivered an inspiring speech. It seemed to us a sort of war-cry and we all felt blood rising to our faces with pride and courage.

Jinnah's Presidential Address to the League is a document of very great importance inasmuch as it is a declaration of a new faith ushering in an era of great activity for the League and Musalmans. It marks the final clash with the Congress and envisages a complete break from its policy and programme for the sake of the country. The Lucknow League brought with it a period which initiated among the Muslims of India a spirit of self-reliance and self-confidence and emphasised a need of self-organisation and self-reform. Jinnah made it clear that Musalmans must learn to stand on their own feet and give up their role as mere supporters of one party or other, and he warned them

from playing into the hands of hostile groups. "The Muslim League," said he, "stands for full national democratic self-government for India. A great deal of capital is made as to phrases more for the consumption of the ignorant and illiterate masses. Various phrases are used, such as *Purna Swaraj*, self-government, complete independence, responsible government, substance of independence and dominion status. There are some who talk of 'complete independence.' But it is no use having complete independence on your lips and the Government of India Act, 1935, in your hands. Those who talk of complete independence the most, mean the least what it means. Was the Gandhi-Irwin Pact in consonance with complete independence? Were the assurances, that were required before the offices would be accepted and the Provincial Constitution could be worked, consistent with *Purna Swaraj*, and was the resolution, after the assurances were refused, accepting offices and working the Provincial Constitution enacted by the British Parliament and forced upon the people of India by the Imperialistic power, in keeping with the policy and programme and the declarations of the Congress Party? Does wrecking mean working? These paper declarations, slogans and shibboleths are not going to carrying us anywhere. What India requires is a complete united front and honesty of purpose and then by whatever

name you may call your government is a matter of no consequence so long as it is a government of the people, by the people, for the people." He explained how the present Congress leadership was responsible for the loss of Muslim interests in the affairs of the Congress, how in North-West Frontier Province where the Congress could not find a majority, "their sacred principle" of collective responsibility disappeared, and promptly the Congress Party was allowed in that province to coalesce with any other group. That any individual Musalman member who was willing to unconditionally surrender and sign their pledge was offered a job as a minister and was passed off as a Musalman minister, although he did not command the confidence or the respect of an overwhelming majority of the Musalman representatives in the legislature. These men are allowed to move about and pass off as Muslim ministers for the 'loyal' services they have rendered to the Congress, by surrendering and signing the pledge unconditionally and the degree of their reward is the extent of their perfidy."

Jinnah drew the attention of his audience to burning questions like the enforcement of Hindi, *Bande Matram* and the Congress flag and explained how the Hindu Governments were influencing all and sundry to obey their mandates in these regards. "On the very thre-

shold," said he, "of what little power and responsibility is given, the majority community have clearly shown their hand that Hindustan is for the Hindus; only the Congress masquerades under the name of nationalism, whereas the Hindu Mahasabha does not mince words. The result of the present Congress Party policy will be, I venture to say, class bitterness, communal war and strengthening of the imperialistic hold as a consequence." Side by side, however, he also had a word to say to the British Government: "I dare say, the British Government will give the Congress a free hand in this direction, and it matters very little to them, nay, on the contrary, it is all to the good, so long as their interests, imperial or otherwise, are not touched and the Defence remains intact, but I feel that a fearful reaction will set in when the Congress has created more and more divisions amongst Indians themselves, and made the united front impossible. Here it will not be out of place to state that the responsibility of the British Government is no less in the disastrous consequences which may ensue. It has been clearly demonstrated that the Governors and the Governor-General who have been given the powers and special responsibility to safeguard and protect the minorities under the Constitution which was made so much of by Lord Zetland, the Secretary of State for India, during the controversy of the assurances demanded by the Congress Party, have failed to use them

and have thereby been a party to the flagrant breach of the spirit of the Constitution and the instrument of instructions in the matter of appointment of Muslim ministers."

Analysing the Congress attitude towards the Hindu-Muslim question and minority problem, he declared: "The Congress High Command speaks in different voices. One opinion is that there is no such thing as Hindu-Muslim question, and there is no such thing as Minorities' question in the country. The other high opinion is that if a few crumbs are thrown to the Musalmans in their present disorganised and helpless state, you can manage them. They are sadly mistaken if they think that the Musalmans can be imposed upon. The All-India Muslim League has now come to live, and play its just part in the world of Indian politics, and the sooner it is realised and reckoned with the better it will be for all interests concerned. The third opinion is that there is no light to be seen through the impenetrable darkness; but as the Congress goes on acquiring strength and power, so the past promises of the blank cheques remain unfilled and unsigned.

"I want the Musalmans to ponder over the situation and decide their own fate by having one single, definite, uniform policy which should be loyally followed throughout India. The Congressite Musalmans are making

a great mistake when they preach unconditional surrender. It is the height of defeatist mentality to throw ourselves on the mercy and goodwill of others and the highest act of perfidy to the Musalman community; and if that policy is adopted, let me tell you, the community will seal its doom and will cease to play its rightful part in the national life of the country and the Government. Only one thing can save the Musalmans and energise them to regain their lost ground. They must first recapture their own souls and stand by their lofty position and principles which form the basis of their great unity and which bind them in one body-politic. Do not be disturbed by the slogans and the taunts such as are used against the Musalmans—communalists, *toadies* and reactionaries. The worst *toady* on earth, the most wicked communalist to-day amongst Muslims, when he surrenders unconditionally to the Congress and abuses his own community, becomes the nationalist of nationalists to-morrow! These terms and words and abuses are intended to create an inferiority complex among the Muslims and to demoralise them; and are intended to sow discord in their midst and give us a bad name in the world abroad. This is the standard of propaganda which can only be treated with contempt."

In spite of all these happenings and their criticism, Mohammad Ali Jinnah made an appeal to the Congress High Command:

"Instead of ploughing the sands, let the Congress at least concentrate and see that the All-India Federation scheme embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935, which is more reactionary than even the present central Constitution, is not brought into being as now it is so emphatically and confidently asserted by those who speak with authority on behalf of the British Government that it is soon going to be inaugurated. What is the Congress going to do? Do they think that they can single-handed as a party prevent it? Or will some other formula be evolved and the Congress quietly accept is as a *fait accompli* as it has done the provincial constitution in spite of all the rantings of some of the foremost leaders of the Congress against it?"

In the end Jinnah drew the attention of the British Government to the important question of Palestine, which had "moved the Musalmans all over India most deeply." The whole policy of the British Government, he said, has been a betrayal of the Arabs from its very inception. "Fullest advantage has been taken of their trusting nature. Great Britain has dishonoured her proclamation to the Arabs which had guaranteed to them complete independence of the Arab homelands, and the formation of an Arab Confederation under stress of the Great War. After having utilised them, by giving them false promises, they installed themselves as the

mandatory power with that infamous Balfour Declaration, which was obviously irreconcilable and incapable of simultaneous execution and having pursued the policy to find a national home for the Jews, Great Britain now proposes to partition Palestine, and the Royal Commission's recommendation completes the tragedy and if given effect to must necessarily lead to the complete ruination and destruction of every legitimate aspiration of the Arabs in their homeland; and now we are asked to look at the realities. But who created this situation? It has been the handiwork and brought about sedulously by the British statesmen. The League of Nations has, it seems, and let us hope, not approved of the Royal Commission's scheme and a fresh examination may take place. But is it a real effort intended to give the Arabs their due? May I point out to Great Britain that this question of Palestine, if not fairly and squarely met, boldly and courageously decided, is going to be the turning point in the history of the British Empire. I am sure I am speaking not only of the Musalmans of India but of the world, and all sections of thinking and fair-minded people will agree when I say that Great Britain will be digging its grave if she fails to honour her original proclamation, promises and intentions—pre-war and even post-war—which were so unequivocally expressed to the Arabs and the world at large. I find that a very tense feeling of excitement has been created and the

British Government, out of sheer desperation, are resorting to repressive measures and ruthlessly dealing with the public opinion of the Arabs in Palestine. The Muslims of India will stand solid and will help the Arabs in every way they can in their brave and just struggle that they are carrying on against all odds. May I send a message on behalf of the All-India Muslim League of cheer, courage, and determination in their just cause and struggle and I am sure they will win through."

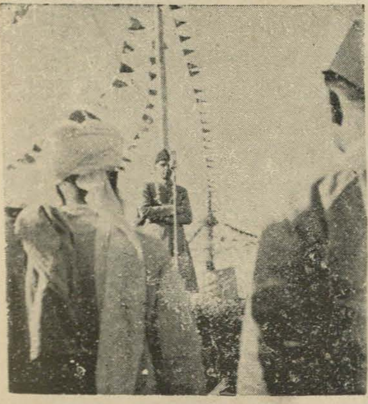
Jinnah concluded his address with a passionate appeal to Muslim India to rally round the League and decide on programmes for the welfare of Musalmans.

During the proceedings and deliberations of the Lucknow League, Jinnah had to face opinions of all shades and individuals belonging to all sorts of schools of thought, and on practically every issue that came up for discussion before the Subjects Committee, it seemed that the different elements would never agree with each other and that the verbal wrangles would continue for years. But after every section had been given full scope for expression, the President would rise and a pin-drop silence would reign over the entire assembly. He would say a few words touching every point of view and replying to every criticism and then he would suggest a *via media*. Every one would

FROM EVERY ANGLE A POLITICIAN









subscribe to this compromise and he would finally ask whether there were any objections and all, fully convinced, would cry out with one voice that there was no dissent, and in a moment the little hall that housed the Committee would seem to burst with loud cries of Jinnah's praise, and enthusiastic national slogans would fill the air.

One of the outstanding accomplishments of the League at Lucknow was that the ministries functioning in Bengal under Maulvi Fazlul Haq and in the Punjab under Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan (who became Prime Minister after the death of Sir Fazl-i-Husain) subscribed to the League policy and its programme and the Muslim members of these ministerial parties signed the League pledge. A new orientation was given to the League and its creed was changed without any shadow of ambiguity, to full independence. Resolutions regarding Palestine and the Federal part of the Government of India Act of 1935 were also passed as indicated by Mohammad Ali Jinnah in his presidential address.

After the Lucknow League the President once again started his tour of the various important centres in India with a view to strengthening the League and consolidating its forces. The Congress, however, unmindful of the League proceeded in its usual way and at the end of October its Working Committee

at Calcutta issued long statements regarding the minorities' rights and *Bande Matram*. These statements were really meant to distract the imagination of the people and were cleverly worded. Jinnah was once more pressed from all sides that he should make the Muslim position clear *Iqbal's letter given* below is characteristic. "I suppose you have already read," wrote the Muslim philosopher, "the resolution passed by the A.-I.C.C. Your move in time has saved the situation, and we are all waiting for your observations on the Congress resolution. The *Tribune* of Lahore has already criticised it and I believe Hindu opinion will generally be opposed to it. However, it should not act as an opiate as far as Muslim are concerned. We must carry the work of organisation more vigorously than ever and should not rest till Muslim Governments are established in the five provinces and reforms are granted to Baluchistan."

The clarification came on the 3rd of November when a reception was arranged by Musalmans of Bombay in his honour and Jinnah criticised the Congress resolution and its statements regarding minorities and *Bande Matram*, but at the same time appealed to the Congress that it should settle with the Muslims the various issues which confronted India at the moment, as it was no use fighting among ourselves. The aim of the League, he pointed out, was the same as that of the

Congress. Only the Musalmans did not feel secure under the future constitution of India and if they could be assured of their political freedom there was really no reason why both the great organisations should not coalesce to put forth a united programme.

The release to the press of Gandhi's message to Mohammad Ali Jinnah and the Presidential Address delivered before the League at Lucknow necessitated Gandhi's writing to Jinnah and correspondence started between the two leaders. Gandhi complained of Jinnah's making public a "private" message and in subsequent letters accused him of declaring a war on the Congress. Jinnah defended his attitude with all his might and said that negotiations of this character could not be conducted through the medium of the post. The first correspondence culminated in Gandhi and Jinnah meeting each other while the other ended in vague argumentation. The reader is referred to these letters already published for a detailed study. But special attention is drawn to the letter of Gandhi dated the 24th of February 1938, which runs as follows:

"I have read your letter to Jawaharlal also. I observe that both the letters invite not written replies but a personal discussion. I do not know whether it will take place in the first instance between you and

Jawaharlal or, now that Subhas Bose succeeds him, between you and the latter. If you desire that before this there should be a talk between you and me. I would be delighted to see you in Segaon any time which is convenient to you before March 10, after which, if health permits, I might have to go to Bengal. So far as I am concerned, just as on the Hindu-Muslim question I was guided by Dr. Ansari, now that he is no more in our midst, I have accepted Maulana Abul Kalam Azad as my guide. My suggestion, therefore, to you is that conversation should be opened in the first instance as between you and the Maulana Sahib. But in every case, regard me as at your disposal."

To this Jinnah replied in his letter dated the 3rd March and the following is its full text: "In your letter I missed the note of responses. First, whether you are of opinion that you see light now and the moment has come, and, secondly, if so, whether you are prepared to take the matter up in right earnest. I find that there is no change in your attitude and mentality when you say you would be guided by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad as Dr. Ansari is no more. If you pursue this line you will be repeating the same tragedy as you did when you expressed your helplessness because Dr. Ansari, holding pronounced and diehard views, did not

agree, and you had to say that you were willing, but what would you do? This happened, as you know, before you went to the Round Table Conference.

"At the Round Table Conference the tragedy was repeated by you when you seemed to be willing to accept provisionally certain terms; but you there, also, expressed that you were helpless as the Hindus were unwilling and you, as a representative of the Congress, would have no objection if the Hindus and Muslims came to an agreement. We have reached a stage when no doubt should be left that you recognise the All-India Muslim League as the one authoritative organisation of Muslims of India and, on the other hand, you represent the Congress and other Hindus throughout the country. It is only on that basis that we can proceed further and devise a machinery of approach. Of course, I shall be glad to see you, although I shall be equally glad to see Pandit Jawaharlal or Mr. Bose as you may desire. The matter, as you know, will not be clinched without reference again to you by either of them. Therefore, I will prefer to see you first. In any case, I am sorry to say that I cannot come to Segaon to see you before March 19. I have to go to Bombay and also I have fixed various other engagements of my tour; but we can fix up the time and place that may suit us both."

Gandhi sent the following reply to Jinnah on the 8th March: " Your letter revives painful memories. I will not discuss at this stage, at any rate, the various debatable points raised in your letter. Suffice it to say that I am at your disposal. If you cannot come to Segaon and my health permits, I will gladly go to Bombay to meet you when you are there. At present I have to go to Bengal and then for a while to Orissa. This will take me through the whole of this month. The earliest, therefore, that we can meet will be in April. Two questions arising from your letter demand a reply. You ask me whether I have now seen the light. Much to my regret, I have to say, 'No'. If I had, I would proclaim the news from the house-tops; but that limitation does not debar me from taking advantage of the slightest opportunity of finding a way out of the present difficulty. You expect me to be able to speak on behalf of 'the Congress and other Hindus throughout the country.' I am afraid I cannot fulfil the test. I cannot represent either the Congress or the Hindus in the sense you mean; but I would exert to the utmost all the moral influence I could have with them in order to secure an honourable settlement."

On the 17th of the same month Jinnah replied: " As you do not wish to discuss the various points mentioned in my letter and the two questions which you have answered

are far from hopeful, I am helpless. However, as you say, 'suffice it to say that I am at your disposal,' I gather, you would nevertheless like to take advantage of the slightest opportunity of finding a way out of the present difficulty. In these circumstances, I beg to inform you that I shall be glad to see you in Bombay sometime in April as suggested by you."

A study of the letters quoted above reveals the extraordinary attitude that Gandhi preferred to take at the moment towards the League and its leader. After Jawaharlal's statement at Calcutta that the Congress enjoyed the confidence of Musalmans more than the League did, the point of contention shifted to the right of representation of Muslim interests. It was therefore necessary for the League President that prior to any talk of this character he should establish the representative character of the League and to this effect he made himself quite clear in his letter to Gandhi, and the latter's suggestion that Maulana Abul Kalam Azad should in the first instance meet Jinnah for the solution of the communal problem was something in the nature of a political manoeuvre and was naturally resented by the Muslim leader. The suggestion was twice made during this period and was twice politely refused.

Side by side with the stupendous task of organising the Muslims and rallying them

round the League, Jinnah pursued his campaign of bringing the two great communities together in spite of the bitter experiences he had during the past few months. In January 1938 he visited Allahabad and all his public utterances there emphasised but one main point. He appealed to Congress leadership to join hands with the League and settle the communal problem, which, he said, was essential for unity and for the political advancement of India. Continually and consistently, he pleaded that he had nothing nearer and dearer to his heart than the general welfare of India and the amelioration of his countrymen. Both in private and in public he had been making incessant efforts to convince the Congress leaders that their policy was disastrous and would lead them nowhere. In fact he criticised the activities and policy of the Congress with the legitimate hope that he would be able to right the wrong that was being done by its leaders.

In February when he was at Aligarh and was as usual called upon by the students of the Muslim University to give them a resume of the work done by him and the League, he said: "Since 1924 the Musalmans have not been behind any others in their honest desire for full self-government. In this matter there was no difference. But the basic principle so far both of the Congress policy and the League policy had been that the rights and

interests of all the minorities must be safeguarded in any constitution by whomsoever framed. Many efforts had been made since 1924 till the Round Table Conference to settle the Muslim-Hindu question. At that time, I knew no pride and used to beg from the Congress. I worked so incessantly to bring about a rapprochement that a newspaper remarked that Mr. Jinnah is never tired of Hindu-Muslim unity. But I received the shock of my life at the meetings of the Round Table Conference. In the face of danger the Hindu sentiment, the Hindu mind, the Hindu attitude led me to the conclusion that there was no hope of unity. I felt very pessimistic about my country. The position was most unfortunate. The Musalmans were like dwellers in No Man's Land; they were led by either the flunkeys of the British Government or the camp-followers of the Congress. Whenever attempts were made to organise the Muslims, toadies and flunkeys on the one hand and traitors in the Congress camp on the other, frustrated the efforts. I began to feel that neither could I help India, nor change the Hindu mentality, nor could I make the Musalmans realise their precarious position. I felt so disappointed and so depressed that I decided to settle down in London. Not that I did not love India; but I felt utterly helpless. I kept in touch with India. At the end of four years I found that the Musalmans were in the greatest danger.

I made up my mind to come back to India, as I could not do them any good from London. Having no sanction behind me I was in the position of a beggar and received the treatment that a beggar deserves.

"Then in 1935 I entered into negotiations with the President of the Congress. A formula was evolved but the Hindus won't look at it. In 1936, I said to the Congress, 'Never mind what was done, stop this bitter controversy over the Communal Award. Good, bad or indifferent, let it stand in the absence of an agreed solution. Let us face the bigger issues.' But when I felt I had exploited every method of bringing about unity I turned round to see what the actual situation demanded. I saw that the new Constitution was coming. From 1924 to 1936 it came to this—nothing doing. In sheer desperation I called the session of the All-India Muslim League in April 1936, and the League decided to contest the elections in the provinces. There was opposition from every direction from the Congress, from many of our own people. With no primary organisation and with very inadequate resources the League fought the elections and achieved a considerable measure of success. But still in some of our own majority provinces, there was no Muslim League party. However, working with determination and perseverance since April, 1936, we have achieved something which is wonderful.

"Let us recapitulate our position. Firstly, there was the bureaucracy; they felt that they had acquired a prescriptive right over the Musalmans. They said, 'well, if this Jinnah fellow comes Muslims will be out of our hands.' It has happened so. The Musalmans, thank God, are to-day out of their hands. But power has now passed to a certain extent into the hands of the majority community. It is now clear that the British Government shows no signs of coming to the help of Muslims but is throwing them to the wolves. I am glad; so far so good. To a very great extent the Muslim League has freed the Musalmans from the clutches of the British Government. But now there is another power which claims to be the successor of the British Government. Call it by whatever name you like, but it is Hindu and Hindu Government.

"Political language is woolly and misleading. I shall speak plainly. What is the attitude of the Congress? It may be summed up thus: The Muslim League is composed of toadies; it is a reactionary body; it is in alliance with the Imperialistic power.' That is how they denounce the Muslim League. Well, what has the League done? The League decided with regard to the prevailing conditions that the provincial Constitution should be utilised for what it was worth. On the other hand, the decision of the Congress was to wreck the Constitution. The Congress

did not have patience with the League which had adopted a full-blooded nationalistic programme. We were trying to make the Muslim League completely representative of the Muslim community. I was misrepresented and maligned in the Congress press. I was dubbed a communalist. They said, 'Well, Jinnah may be all right, but he is surrounded by toadies and flunkeys who will swallow him up.' Every time some plausible excuse was made to ignore the Muslims. The Congress tried to poison the minds of our youth and delude them into the belief that the Congress stood for complete independence and would remove poverty and hunger. But what were really their designs? They wanted certain assurances from the British Government which they failed to get. They are not only utilising but working the very Constitution they had so vehemently professed to wreck. To the Muslims they gave all sorts of silly assurances. In one province the Congress Premier went to the extent of declaring that he would lay down his very life if a single brick of a mosque were touched. That sounded very noble. But what actually happened? In that very province, namely, Bihar, the cumulative system of voting has been taken away with the result that no Muslim was elected in the last election. We, therefore, cannot depend upon assurance and good-will. In politics good-will and love and affection and regard can only be demonstrated

when you are strong. People know how to touch your weak points or if you like your strong points. When you are told of this heart-rending hunger and poverty, when somebody comes and tells you, 'Oh, what is the use of anything? let us remove these appalling conditions. The Congress is struggling to achieve independence and to establish a communistic and socialistic Government. The economic issue is the only issue that faces us'—you will be moved; I confess I myself sometimes feel moved. This has been constantly dinned into the ears of the youth. When you think you will be able to destroy the British Government, the zemindars, the capitalists with one stroke refer to the conditions of Europe. In Germany, Hitlerism came into existence because of socialistic and communistic movements. So did Fascism rise in Italy. What is the fight in Spain about? It is the same issue. When the question was put to the President of the Congress party as to when he would be able to fulfil this wonderful progamme, he said, 'within my lifetime,' and added, 'when we have captured power we will destroy this Constitution, not by the quill pen.' But the question is how long will he hold the quill pen or rather the reed pen which he is doing at present?

"We in India have been brought up in the traditions of the British parliamentary democracy. The Constitution foisted on us is

also modelled more or less on the British pattern. But there is an essential difference between the body politic of this country and that of Britain. The majority and minority parties in Britain are alterable, to-morrow Liberal and the day after Labour. But such is not the case with India. Here we have a permanent Hindu majority and the rest are minorities which cannot within any conceivable period of time hope to become majorities. The majority can afford to assume a non-communal label, but it remains exclusively Hindu in its spirit and action. The only hope for minorities is to organise themselves and secure definite and statutory safeguards for their rights and interests. Without such safeguards for their rights and interests no constitution can work successfully in India.

"My appeal to you is: Come to the platform of the League. If Muslims are united the settlement will come sooner than you think. You will have established your claim to achieve freedom. After a few months' work, the League's name is known in every corner of India. Lakhs of people are joining it. Even those who are against us, will realise that they are under a serious delusion and their only course is to join the League and make the Musalmans speak with one voice.

"What the League has done is to set you free from the reactionary elements of

Muslims and to create the opinion that those who play their selfish game are traitors. It has certainly freed you from that undesirable element of Maulvis and Maulanas. I am not speaking of Maulvis as a whole class. There are some of them who are as patriotic and sincere as any other ; but there is a section of them which is undersirable.

" Having freed ourselves from the clutches of the British Government, the Congress, the reactionaries and the Maulvis, may I appeal to the youth to emancipate our women. This is essential. I do not mean that we are to ape the evils of the West. What I mean is that they must share our life, not only social but also political.

" The personnel of the League is far from being perfect. It is no use making allegations ; it is no use telling me this man is bad or that man is undesirable. If you are really in earnest your only course is to join the League and make improvements.

" I am convinced and you will agree with me that the Congress policy is to divide the Muslims among themselves. It is the same old tactics of the British Government. They follow the policy of their masters. Don't fall into the trap. This is a moment of life and death for the Musalmans. Take it from me that unless there is unity among the

Muslims at any cost, they will be lost. If our house is defective we must set it right ourselves. If you support us we will set it right ourselves as we like and desire.

"Mr. President, I have received from you to-day the greatest message of hope. March forward and no power on earth can resist you. I find in front of me the finest recruiting ground. Lakhs are ready to serve the platform and the flag of the All-India Muslim League. To make a good efficient soldier you at least require a year. To make a good subaltern at least five years are required. I see enormous power latent in these people. This stage has been more easily reached than the stage of harnessing them and mobilising them and making the political army. What is the difference between the Hindus and the Muslims? If Wardha makes any decision and issues orders to-morrow, millions of Hindus will follow and obey. I ask you suppose the Muslim League were to issue any order, what will happen to it? We are not sufficiently equipped and trained and therefore it will be difficult to produce lakhs of Muslims to carry out orders. The British Government is always thinking of what the Congress is doing, what is going to be the repercussion of the British policy in the Congress camp. But will the British Government think of you? No, because you are not an organised power. Therefore, develop your power and establish

your solidarity. The Muslim League is determined to win freedom but it will be a freedom not only for the strong and the dominant but also for the weak and the suppressed."

During the Lucknow League Session, Mohammad Ali Jinnah had succeeded in gaining the support of the Muslim members of the Punjab and Bengal Legislative Assemblies, but he had not succeeded elsewhere. The work had to be accomplished and in March the Council of the All-India Muslim League resolved that the "President be authorised to take all necessary steps to form a Muslim League party in the Central Legislature at an early date with power to the party so formed to coalesce with any other party or group whose policy and programme is approximately the same as that of the All-India Muslim League." The resolution was given effect to almost immediately. Simultaneously the Provincial Muslim Leagues were being formed and affiliated to the Central organisation and when the special session of the League met at Calcutta in April the situation was miraculously improved.

Jinnah's Presidential Address at Calcutta is important because it gives a summary of the current events and an account of the various stages through which the League was passing at the time. It is, therefore, proper

to give the relevant portions of the Address here as briefly as can be possible.

"We have to a certain extent freed our people," said Mohammad Ali Jinnah, "from the most undesirable reactionary elements. We have in no small degree removed the unwholesome influence and fear of a certain section who used to pass off as Maulanas and Maulvis. We have made efforts to take our women with us in our struggle and in many places that I visited they took enormous interest and participated in various functions and gatherings. We have to carry on and maintain the policy and the programme of the Muslim League on a political plane. Within less than six months we have succeeded in organising Musalmans all over India as they never were at any time during the last century and a half. They have been galvanised and awakened in a manner which has astounded and staggered our opponents. Musalmans have shaken off torpor and shed their miserable state of despair and demoralisation into which they were sunk so deep. They are beginning to realise that they are a power. They possess the strength, the potentialities of which they have not yet realised, and if only they will take their affairs in their own hands and stand together united there is no power that can resist their will."

"The enthusiasm that was shown at Lucknow has been kept up and the League has been growing stronger and stronger every day. Before the Lucknow Session, the membership of the League ran into several thousands but today there are hundreds of thousands of Muslims who are under the banner of the League. In ten out of the twelve provinces all over India, Provincial Leagues with numerous Primary and District Branches have either been formed or are in the process of being constituted in accordance with our new democratic constitution. It is expected that within a short time there will be a live and strong Provincial League functioning in every Province of India. Today it can be said that every thinking and patriotic Musalman is in the fold of the Muslim League. The Primary and District Leagues in the various provinces are vying with each other in the enrolment of members. Not very long ago, there were innumerable places where the name of the League was not even heard but today League's name is a household word in every Muslim home. If we continue with the same enthusiasm and vigour, there is not the least doubt that the All-India Muslim League will soon be a power to reckon with."

Speaking about the work inside the Legislatures, the League President declared: "There are Muslim League Parties functioning

inside the seven out of the eleven Provincial Legislatures. The large majority of Muslim members in all these seven Provincial Assemblies belong to the Muslim League Parties and the membership of these parties is increasing every day. The Muslim League contested with great success a number of by-elections to the Legislative Assemblies in various Provinces. The Council of the League appointed a Committee to chalk out an economic, social and educational programme for the Musalmans. The report of the Committee is being awaited with great interest.

" We greatly deplore the communal riots that have taken place in the United Provinces and other Provinces. It is being publicly stated by the Congress Ministers in these Provinces that the responsibility for these riots rests on the shoulders of the Muslim League. It is most deplorable that a Minister of the Government should make such loose and untrue statements. These allegations against the Muslim League are absolutely without any foundation, and are being used as a blind against the incapacity of the Congress Governments in these Provinces. All sorts of malicious propaganda is being carried out to discredit the Muslim League. But, God willing, the Muslim League in spite of all this will go on getting stronger every day. A few months ago, Muslim

community was like 'no man's land' but today it has come into its own and there is no power on earth that can now keep it dormant or inactive. The Musalmans have realised that their salvation lies in organising themselves under the banner of the Muslim League. Once they are organised they need fear no one . . . . . Numerous representations and complaints have reached the Central Office, of hardship, ill-treatment and injustice that is meted out to Musalmans in the various Governments of the Congress Provinces, and particularly to those who were workers and members of the All-India Muslim League, and, therefore, the Council were obliged to appoint a special Committee under the chairmanship of Raja Sahib Mohammad Mehdi of Pirpur to make all necessary inquiries and to take such steps as may be considered proper and to submit their report to the Council and the President."

Analysing the attitude of the Congress leaders towards the question of a Hindu-Muslim settlement Mohammad Ali Jinnah remarked: " Although some of the pronouncements of the President and other leaders of the Congress at Haripura created an impression of a really genuine desire for the settlement of the Hindu-Muslim question—and in pursuance of that Mr. Gandhi and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru have written to me and I have replied to those letters and the correspondence

is going on—yet there is no slackening on the part of the Congress in the determination of their set purpose to annihilate every other party and particularly the All-India Muslim League. The Congress attitude so far can be summed up, first, that the Communal Award must go lock, stock and barrel; second, that there must be no separate electorates and thirdly, that there must be no differential franchise and if possible there should be no reservation of seats for any community. The result of this will be obvious, namely, that Musalmans will be wiped out from securing any adequate representation whether in the Legislatures or in the Municipal, Local and District Boards as it happened in Bihar recently since the Congress Governments have removed even the existence of cumulative voting which existed before they assumed office."

At Calcutta Mohammad Ali Jinnah also gave a hint that as far as the future Constitution of India was concerned, taking in particular their recent experiences at the hands of the Congress into consideration, the Musalmans would not be satisfied unless their rights and interests were completely safeguarded. He declared: "Muslims have made it clear more than once that besides the question of religion, culture, language and personal laws, there is another question equally of life and death for them and that

their future destiny and fate are dependent upon their securing definitely their political rights, their due share in the national life, the government and the administration of the country. They will fight for it till the last ditch and all the dreams and notions of the Hindu Raj must be abandoned. They will not be submerged or dominated and they will not surrender so long as there is life in them. The Muslim League claims the status of complete equality with the Congress or any other organisation and we have our problems to solve. We have under the present conditions to organise our people for building up Muslim masses for a better world and for their immediate uplift, social and economic, and we have to formulate plans of constructive and ameliorative character which would give them immediate relief from the poverty and wretchedness from which they are suffering more than any other sections of people in India. I welcome a policy of live and let live. I welcome an understanding in matters economic and political. But we cannot surrender, submerge or submit to the dictates or the ukase of the High Command of the Congress which is developing into a totalitarian and authoritarian caucus functioning under the name of the Working Committee and aspiring to the position of a Shadow Cabinet of a future Republic. The Muslim League is not only carrying on a struggle for the Muslims but it maintains that all other

important minorities must have the same sense of security and a place in the sun of India where they will enjoy the rights and privileges as free citizens and not be ground down by caste tyranny and caste rule. In my opinion the Congress is making one of the greatest blunders by pursuing its present policy."

At the end of April, at last Gandhi came to meet Jinnah in Bombay and after a short talk, he perhaps realised that as he had no sanction of the Congress behind him it was but fair that the Congress President must meet the League President. He consequently wired to Subhas Bose who had succeeded Nehru to the Presidentship of the Congress. Jinnah in his letter to Gandhi prior to the two meeting each other had already given an indication that he would insist on establishing the representative character of the League, and when the President of the Congress was asked to meet the President of the League, this question became more acute. The two leaders were meeting in their representative capacities and if a pact for the settlement of the communal problem was arrived at between the two, on whom would it be binding? Which organisation was to assume responsibility on behalf of Muslims and which of Hindus? And if Jinnah was representing the Muslim case, who was doing the same from the other

side? In the first stage of the communal negotiations with Bose, therefore, Jinnah put forward the claim that the League must be accepted as the authoritative and representative organisation of Musalmans. To this Bose had made the following observations in a note which he handed over to Jinnah.

"The Congress cannot possibly consider itself or function as if it represented one community only, even though that might be the majority community in India. If doors must inevitably be open to all communities it must welcome all Indians who agree with its general policy and methods. It cannot accept the position of representing one community and thus itself becoming a communal organisation. At the same time the Congress is perfectly willing to confer and co-operate with other organisations which represent minority interests. It is obvious that the Musalmans of India, though a minority in the whole country, form a very considerable part of the population and their wishes and desires must be considered in any scheme affecting India. It is also true that the All-India Muslim League is an organisation representing a large body of Muslim opinion which must carry weight. It is for this reason that the Congress endeavoured to understand the view-point of the League and to come to an understanding with it. The Congress, however, would be bound to consult other

existing Muslim organisations which have co-operated with the Congress in the past. Further, in the event of other groups of minority interests being involved, it will be necessary to consult representatives of such interests."

The League Executive Council discussed this note in June and declared that the League President could not proceed to discuss matters with the head of the Congress except on the basis outlined by him already. The Council also considered the suggestion of Gandhi that both the organisations should appoint committees for the purpose of the communal settlement and resolved that it would not be desirable for the Congress to include any Muslim in the proposed committee that might be appointed to represent the Congress. The Executive Council of the League also made it clear "that it is the declared policy of the All-India Muslim League that all other minorities should have their rights and interests safeguarded so as to create a sense of security amongst them and win their confidence, and the All-India Muslim League will consult the representatives of such minorities and any other interest as may be involved, when necessary."

It was now the turn of the Congress President to reply and on the 25th July when Jinnah's letter and enclosures were placed

before the Congress Committee, Gandhi dictated the following reply on behalf of the Congress President: "The Working Committee has given all the attention it was possible for it to give to the resolutions of the Muslim League you were good enough to enclose with your letter of the 6th June 1938. The first resolution of the League Council defines the status of the League. If it means that, before we proceed to set up a machinery for considering the terms of settlement of the communal question, the Congress should recognise the status as defined in that resolution, there is an obvious difficulty. Though the resolution does not use the adjective 'only', the language of the resolution means that the adjective is understood. Already the Working Committee has received warnings against recognising the exclusive status of the League. There are Muslim organisations which have been functioning independently of the Muslim League. Some of them are staunch supporters of the Congress. Moreover, there are individual Muslims who are Congressmen, some of whom exercise no inconsiderable influence in the country. Then there is the Frontier Province which is overwhelmingly Muslim and which is solidly with the Congress. You will see that in the face of these known facts it is not only impossible but improper for the Congress to make the admission which the first resolution of the League Council apparently desire the Congress to make. It is

suggested that the status of organisations does not accrue to them by any defining of it. It comes through the service to which a particular organisation has dedicated itself. The Working Committee therefore hopes that the League Council will not ask the Congress to do the impossible. Is it not enough that the Congress is not only willing but eager to establish the friendliest relations with the League and to come to an honourable understanding over the much vexed Hindu-Muslim question ?

" At this stage it may perhaps be as well to state the Congress claim. Though it is admitted that the largest number of persons to be found on the numerous Congress registers are Hindus, the Congress has a fairly large number of Muslims and members of other communities professing different faiths. It has been an unbroken tradition with the Congress to represent all communities, all races, and all classes to whom India is their home. From its inception it has often had distinguished Muslims as Presidents and as General Secretaries who enjoyed the confidence of the Congress and of the country. The Congress tradition is that though a Congressman does not cease to belong to the faith in which he is born and bred up, no one comes to the Congress by virtue of his faith ; he is in and out of the Congress by virtue of his endorsement of the political

principles and policy of the Congress. The Congress, therefore, is in no sense a communal organisation. In fact it has always fought the communal spirit because it is detrimental to the growth of pure and undefiled nationalism. But whilst the Congress makes this claim, and has sought, with more or less success, to live up to the claim, the Working Committee asks for no recognition from the League Council. The Committee would be glad if your Council would come to an understanding with the Congress in order that we might achieve national solidarity and whole-heartedly work for realising our common destiny.

"As to the second resolution of the Council, I am afraid that it is not possible for the Working Committee to conform to the desire expressed therein.

"The third resolution, the Working Committee is unable to understand. So far as the Working Committee is aware, the Muslim League is purely a communal organisation, in the sense that it seeks to serve Muslim interests and its membership too is open only to Muslims. The Working Committee also has all along understood that so far as the League is concerned, it desires, and rightly, a settlement with the Congress on the Hindu-Muslim question and not on questions affecting all minorities. So far as

the Congress is concerned, if the other minorities have a grievance against the Congress, it is always ready to deal with them as it is its bounden duty to do, being by its very constitution and organisation representative of all India without distinction of caste or creed.

"In view of the foregoing I hope that it will be possible for us to take up the next stage in our negotiations for reaching a settlement.

"It is suggested that as the previous correspondence has already been published, it would be wise to take the public into confidence and publish the subsequent correspondence between us. If you are agreeable these documents will be immediately released for publication."

At the end of July the League Executive Council again met and on the 2nd August 1938, Jinnah was authorised to send the following reply to Bose : "I placed your letter dated the 25th of July 1938 before the meeting of the Executive Council of the All-India Muslim League.

"The Executive Council gave its earnest attention and careful consideration to the arguments which were urged in your letter for persuading it not to claim the status it has

done in its resolution No. 1, already communicated to you. I am desired to state that in defining the status the Council was not actuated by any motive of securing an admission, but had merely stated an accepted fact.

"The Council is fully convinced that the Muslim League is the only authoritative political organisation of the Musalmans of India. This position was accepted when the Congress-League Pact was arrived at in 1916 at Lucknow and ever since, till 1935, when Jinnah-Rajendra Prasad conversation took place, it has not been questioned. The All-India Muslim League, therefore, does not require any admission or recognition from the Congress and nor did the resolution of the Executive Council passed at Bombay. But in view of the fact that the position—in fact the very existence—of the League had been questioned by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the President of the Congress, in one of his statements wherein he asserted that there were only two parties in the country, namely, the British Government and the Congress, it was considered necessary by the Executive Council to inform the Congress of the basis on which the negotiations between the two organisations could proceed.

"Besides, the very fact that Congress approached the Muslim League to enter into negotiations for a settlement of the Hindu-

Muslim question, it presupposed the authoritative and representative character of the League and as such its right to come to an agreement on behalf of the Musalmans of India.

"The Council are aware of the fact that there is a Congress Coalition Government in North-West Frontier Province and also that there are some Muslims in the Congress organisation in other provinces. But the Council is of opinion that these Muslims in the Congress do not and cannot represent the Musalmans of India, for the simple reason that their number is very insignificant and that as members of the Congress they have disabled themselves from representing or speaking on behalf of the Muslim community. Were it not so, the whole claim of the Congress alleged in your letter regarding its national character would fall to the ground.

"As regards 'the other Muslim organisations' to which reference has been made in your letter, but whom you have not even named, the Council considers that it would have been more proper if no reference had been made to them. If they collectively or individually had been in a position to speak on behalf of the Musalmans of India, the negotiations with the Muslim League for a settlement of the Hindu-Muslim question would not have been initiated by the President of the Congress and Mr. Gandhi. However,

so far as the Muslim League is concerned, it is not aware that any Muslim political organisation has ever made a claim that it can speak or negotiate on behalf of the Muslims of India. It is, therefore, very much to be regretted that you should have referred to 'other Muslim organisations' in this connection.

"The Council is equally anxious to bring about a settlement of 'the much vexed Hindu-Muslim question' and thus hasten the realisation of the common goal, but it is painful to find that subtle arguments are being introduced to cloud the issue and retard the progress of the negotiations.

"In view of the facts stated above, the Council still hopes that the representative character of the Muslim League will not be questioned and that the Congress will proceed to appoint a committee on that basis.

"With reference to the second resolution, the Council wishes to point out that it considered undesirable the inclusion of Musalmans in the Committee that might be appointed by the Congress, because it would meet to solve and settle the Hindu-Muslim question, and so in the very nature of the issues involved they would not command the confidence of either Hindus or the Musalmans and their position indeed would be-most embarrassing. The Council, therefore,

requests you to consider the question in the light of the above observations.

"With reference to the third resolution it was the memorandum of the Congress referred to in your letter dated the 15th of May 1938 in which mention of other minorities was made and the Muslim League expressed its willingness to consult them, if and when it was necessary, in consonance with its declared policy.

"As regards your desire for the release of the correspondence, including this letter, for publication the Council has no objection to your doing so."

In reply to this letter of the League President, the Congress President on the 2nd of October wrote as follows:

"Your letter of the 2nd August 1938 has been placed before the Working Committee. After due deliberation it has resolved to reply as follows:

"Though there are inaccuracies in your letter, no purpose will be served by dwelling on them. The substance of your letter seems to be that the League does not expect the Congress, whether implicitly or explicitly, to acknowledge its status as the authoritative Muslim organisation of India. If this view

is accepted by the League, I am authorised to state that the Working Committee will confer with the Committee that may be appointed by the League to draw up the terms of settlement.

"The Working Committee will be represented by at least five of its members at the sittings of the Conference.

"As the previous correspondence has already been released for publication, I am taking the liberty of issuing this to the press."

The Executive Council of the League was meeting at Karachi on the 8th of October and Mohammad Ali Jinnah placed this letter of Subhas Chandra Bose before it. The Council considered the letter of the Congress President and authorised the League President to send the following reply, which the latter did on the 10th of October 1938:

"I am in receipt of your letter dated the 2nd of October which was placed before the Executive Council. I am authorised to state in reply as follows:

"The Executive Council of the All-India Muslim League regret very much that the Working Committee of the Congress should have entirely misread my letter dated

the 2nd of August 1938 which is quite clear and does not require any elucidation or further interpretation. The Muslim League is still ready to proceed with the negotiations for settlement of the Hindu-Muslim question on the basis defined by my letter referred to above and would appoint its representatives to meet the Committee that may be appointed by the Congress on the footing indicated by us in our three resolutions on the 5th of June 1938, already communicated to you.

"As all the correspondence so far in this connection has been published I am issuing this to the press."

With this all chances of bringing the Congress nearer to realities were frustrated as the Congress did not make a response.

CHAPTER XXII

THE CLASH (CONTD.)

The Congress High Command had now been subjected to criticism from all sides. *Harijans* (Depressed Classes) on the one hand and disillusioned Congressmen on the other had openly come out and criticised the central policy of the Congress. Some incidents in the Congress camp and some quarrels over the distribution of ministerial portfolios and party adjustments had given rise to personal and political animosity between the Congressmen themselves. Too much interference of the Congress Central authority in the administration of the provinces had also generated a considerable amount of bitterness and disgust in the minds of those who were expected to be responsible for the conduct of provincial activities.

The League had by this time acquired considerable status and influence among the Musalmans of India and its strength was being felt by everyone. A provincial Muslim League Conference was called by the province of Sind at Karachi, and Mohammad Ali Jinnah was elected its President. The right royal reception that was given to Jinnah at Karachi had somewhat heightened the signi-

ficance of this Conference more than its venue did. The Conference opened on the 8th of October 1938, amidst enthusiastic scenes. On the platform were seated the Premiers of the Punjab and Bengal and leaders of the All-India Muslim League. Sir Abdullah Haroon read the welcome address and drew attention to the oft-repeated attempts made by Jinnah for the solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem which had proved that his opponents were not inclined to listen to him. Sir Abdullah also drew attention to the atrocities committed by the Congress Governments in the various provinces. He dwelt at length on the Sind Ministerial tangle and declared that the Congress Party had conspired with Hindu Mahasabha to deprive the Muslims of Sind of their right of having a Ministry enjoying their confidence. He maintained there was no use shutting their eyes to the realities of the situation and ignoring the fundamental factors. He assured the minorities in Sind that if they played their part rightly the Muslim League would afford all facilities for the minorities to have their legitimate rights safeguarded.

Then rose Mohammad Ali Jinnah amidst thundering cheers and applause. "Now that your province is an independent entity," said he during his famous presidential address, "the greatest responsibility rests on the shoulders of the Musalmans of Sind for the

welfare and the progress of your province. Not long ago the Musalmans in Sind were divided and torn into groups, but today I am happy to find that there is a wonderful public spirit, solidarity and unity demonstrated, and with proper organisation if you mobilise and harness your powers there is nothing to prevent the Muslim League of your province from assuming the reins of Government of your province. It is in your hands now. You must remember that it is your duty and responsibility which calls upon you to conduct the affairs of the Government of Sind. The Constitution enacted by the Government of India Act of 1935, incorporates many objectionable features, but still you should utilise it with your majority strength successfully for the economic, social, educational and political uplift of the people of Sind and in particular of the Musalmans. I feel confident that mainly the Musalmans of Sind and the right-thinking Hindus will realise that the progress and the welfare of the province lies in maintaining the high principles of justice, fairplay and friendly co-operation amongst the people of Sind."

Continuing he said: "The Musalmans of Sind have another sacred duty to perform and a far graver task in front of them and it is that aspect which I want to impress upon you. In the All-India Muslim struggle against the various forces which are out to destroy

and divide the Musalmans by means of corruption and dishonest propaganda you have to guard yourselves against it and stand solid behind the All-India Muslim League which is the only authoritative organisation of the Musalmans of India . . . . . Do not believe when you are told that the policy and programme of the League is reactionary. No honest man who has studied the policy and programme of the League can conscientiously and truthfully say that it is anything but fully national and most progressive. Yet the Muslim League and its leaders are daily misrepresented and vilified. Truth is suppressed and falsehood is broadcast in the Congress press and news agencies; of course we have no press. Butthe greatest misfortune of India is that the High Command of the Congress have adopted a most brutal, oppressive and inimical attitude towards the All-India Muslim League since they secured the majority in the six provinces. It is common knowledge that the average Congressman, whether he is a member by conviction or 'convenience', arrogates to himself the role of a ruler of this country, and although he does not possess the educational qualifications, training and culture and traditions of the British bureaucrat, he behaves and acts towards the Musalmans in a much worse manner than the British did towards Indians. The supreme command may well deplore corruption, untruthfulness

and violence and may further deplore the faked register of membership of the Congress by ' convenience '."

Proceeding Mohammad Ali Jinnah addressed a few words to the British also and declared: "I know that Governors and the Governor-General have failed the minorities, specially the Muslims. But on the other hand we are told that there is a gentleman's agreement and a secret understanding between the British Government and the Congress in consequence of which assurances were given that such powers would not be exercised, and so it is obvious that the Congress Ministries are getting the longest rope with the result that the foolish policy of the Congress is responsible not only for intense bitterness between the two sister communities but among the various classes and interests. It has resulted in serious clashes and conflicts and ill-will, which are bound to recoil in the long run on the progress and welfare of India. And it seems that Congress is only tumbling into the hands of those who are looking forward to the creation of a serious situation which will break India vertically and horizontally.

Speaking of the situation that Musalmans had to face, Mohammad Ali Jinnah said, "It is no use relying upon any one else. We must stand on our own inherent strength and build

up our own power and forge sanctions behind our decisions. It is no use our blaming others. It is no use accusing our opponents only; it is no use expecting our enemies to behave differently. If the Musalmans are going to be defeated in their national goal and aspirations it will only be by the betrayal of the Musalmans among us as it has happened in the past. For the renegades and traitors I have nothing to say. They can do their worst. But I appeal most fervently to those Musalmans who honestly feel for their community and its welfare and those who are misled or misguided and indifferent to come on to the platform of the Muslim League and under its flag; and please close your rank and file and stand solid and united at any and all costs and speak and act with one voice. Here I wish to make it clear that I am not fighting the Hindu community as such nor have I any quarrel with the Hindus generally for I have many personal friends amongst them."

Referring to the tragedy of Palestine that was going on and the ruthless repression that was practised against the Arabs because of their struggle for the freedom of their country, Mohammad Ali Jinnah declared, "I need hardly tell you that we had most convincing proofs demonstrated all over India that the heart of every Musalman is with them in their brave and wonderful struggle that they are carrying on against all odds and in spite of

their being 'defenceless'. According to the resolution of the All-India Muslim League Council, August 26 was observed all over India as the Palestine Day and from all accounts I can say without exaggeration that thousands and thousands of meetings were held all over India fully and fervently sympathising with those who are fighting for their country's freedom. The Musalman's heart is wounded and lacerated when they hear the news and the accounts of ruthless and tyrannical oppression and repression of those brave Arabs and I know that the entire Muslim world is watching the doings of Great Britain there.

" During the recent times Great Britain has thrown her friends to the wolves and broken her solemn promises. Only those succeed with the British people who possess force and power and who are in a position to bully them. They have also let down and thrown the Musalmans of India to the wolves. I am sure that there will be no peace in the Near East unless they give an honest and square deal to the Arabs in the Palestine. In India I may draw the attention of His Majesty's Government and the British statesman who, I am sure, are not under any delusion that Congress represents the people of India or Indian nation for there are ninety millions of Musalmans. And I would draw their attention and here also of the Congress High Command and ask them to mark, learn and inwardly

digest the recent upheaval and its consequent developments which threatened the world war. It was because the Sudeten Germans were forced under the heels of the majority of Czechoslovakia who oppressed them, suppressed them, maltreated them and showed a brutal and callous disregard for their rights and interests for two decades, hence the inevitable result that the Republic of Czechoslovakia is now broken up and a new map will have to be drawn. Just as the Sudeten Germans were not defenceless and survived the oppression and persecution for two decades so also the Musalmans are not defenceless and cannot give up their national entity and aspirations in this great continent."

Jinnah's address was listened to with rapt attention, and every now and then national slogans were raised by the whole crowd present.

The Sind Provincial Muslim League Conference, among other resolutions, passed one which gave forebodings of future movement among the Musalmans of India. It recommended to the All-India Muslim League that it should review and revise the entire question of a suitable constitution for India, which would secure the honourable status due to Muslims. Sind resolution also suggested that Hindus and Muslims were two different nations.

During the course of this Conference, Jinnah made an attempt to enlist the support of the Muslim members of the Sind Legislature to the League. But the tripartite clique of the Congress, the Hindu Mahasabha and the Governor of Sind had developed into a formidable force. A vote of no-confidence against the Ministry was pending before the Sind Assembly, and Allah Bakhsh, the then Prime Minister of Sind, utilised the opportunity to his advantage, and emphasising the possibility of the formation of a League Ministry wired to the Congress High Command appealing to them to allow Congressmen to exercise their individual discretion in voting over this issue. The Congress High Com mand played into his hands for obvious reasons. This apparent failure of Jinnah was jubilantly exploited by the Hindu press. It was regarded as a death blow to the League and a great victory for the Congress. But Mohammad Ali Jinnah swallowed the reverse quietly biding his time, more determined than ever, to pursue his line of action as and when the League became more organised and developed more strength. With these insinuations and vilifications the Congress President also did not fail to join hands.

Time went on like this and Mohammad Ali Jinnah made continued efforts for organising the Musalmans and acquiring more and more strength for the League. The

plenary session of the All-India Muslim League was being held at Patna in the month of December and the situation was being keenly watched both by the Muslims and the Congress. So busy was the League leader in his work that he had to refuse the invitation of the Defence Secretary to serve on the Indian Sandhurst Committee, although the matter of Army Reform, as has been explained in the foregoing pages, is part and parcel of Jinnah's life-work. Jinnah had no time even to prepare and reduce to writing his presidential address for the Patna session of the League, and by felicitously delivering it extempore he established a precedent which is unparalleled in the history of a political organisation, at any rate in India.

The 26th Annual Session of the All-India Muslim League was held at Patna during the period 26th and 29th of December 1938. It was an imposing demonstration of the powerful position that the League had come to build up, the like of which was unknown since the Lucknow League session. It is worthy of mention that at this session, delegates coming from the remotest corners of India participated. Great enthusiasm prevailed. Many had traversed long distances on bicycles to be able to attend the session. The President was received in a unique style. It was a State Drive through a long road of seven miles from the Patna City Railway Station to the

lawn, where the session *pandal* was situated and near which Mohammad Ali Jinnah was to stay. Along the road were arrayed, on either side, the admirers and followers of the great leader, with green flags in their hands waiting to greet him. The streets were crowded to capacity and to accommodate one more person would have been impossible. The *pandal*, too, was filled almost to suffocation, and thousands of men remained outside. Such was the zeal and enthusiasm of the people. Syed Abdul Aziz, who had sometime back resigned from the League Parliamentary Board on the question of forming mixed parties for the legislatures, was the Chairman of the Reception Committee and welcomed the popular tribune and leader of Muslim India.

Delivering his presidential address Mohammad Ali Jinnah began by expressing his sense of appreciation for the growing strength of the Muslim organisation and his deep sorrow over the death of the three great departed Muslim leaders—Maulana Shaukat Ali, Mustafa Kamal Pasha and Dr. Sir Muhammad Iqbal. He next addressed his audience as follows :—

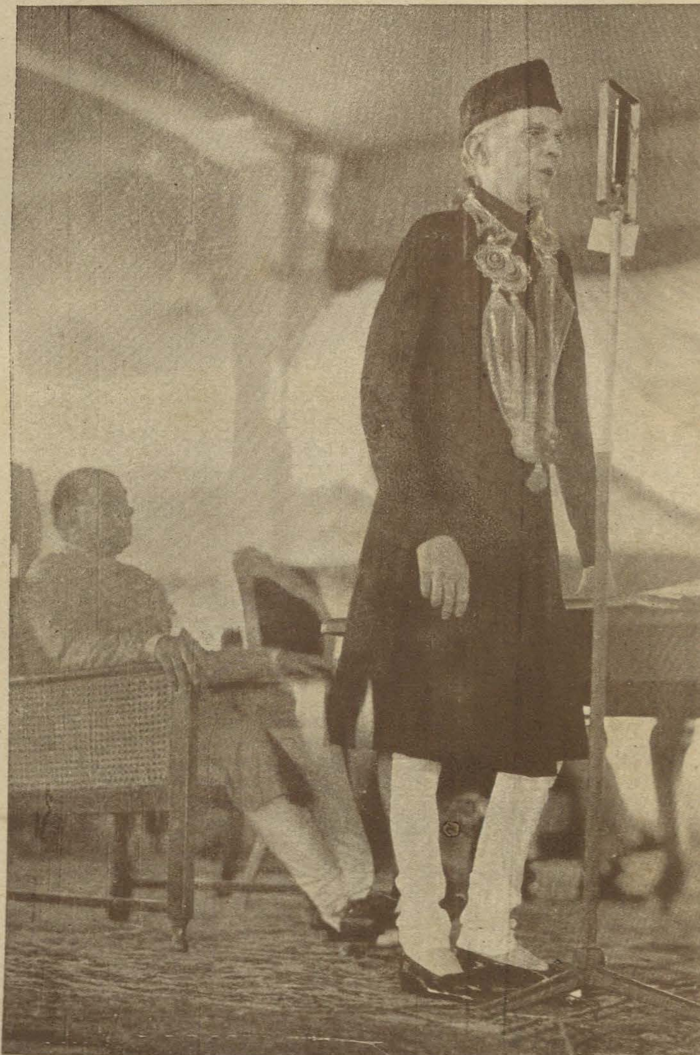
"Ladies and Gentlemen,—I will now refer to the position of the Muslim League. It was only three years ago that we laid down the policy and programme of the All-India Muslim League at Bombay. The

position at that time was this. Of the intelligentsia of the Muslims who were in the forefront of what is called political life, most —I do not say all—were careerists. They chose their places according to their convenience either in the bureaucratic camp or in the other camp, that is, the Congress camp. Those who thought that they could better their position by joining the bureaucratic camp joined the same. The others thought that they could get position and power in the Congress camp and joined that camp. Their object was how best to make careers for themselves. So far as the masses were concerned and so far as my dear young friends the Muslim youth were concerned, they were all hypnotised by the Congress falsehood. The youth believe in slogans and catchwords. They were caught right in the net that was spread for them by the Congress. They were led into the belief that the Congress was fighting for the freedom of the motherland. Being honest themselves they could not believe that other people could be otherwise. They were led to believe that the question was really an economic one and that they were fighting for *dal bhat*, for the labour and the kisans. Their pure, untutored minds became easy victims of the Congress leaders' move, who tried to make them understand that they were being misled; we were dubbed reactionaries, communalists, and much else besides.

"That was the position in 1936. I am glad to say that things have now changed. One thing has been demonstrated beyond doubt, namely, that the Congress High Command wanted the Musalmans to be a mere understudy of the Congress, mere foot-pages of the Congress leaders, to be used, governed and brought under the heels when they had served the purpose of the Congress. The Congress leaders wanted them to submit unconditionally to their Hindu *raj*. That game has now been fully exposed. We have got ample proofs of it . . . . The Congress has now, you must be aware, killed every hope of Hindu-Muslim settlement in the right royal fashion of Fascism. The Congress does not want any settlement with the Muslims of India. As the Chairman of Reception Committee has said in his address, the Congress wants the Muslims to accept the settlement as a gift from the majority. The Congress High Command makes the preposterous claim that they are entitled to speak on behalf of the whole of India, that they alone are capable of delivering goods. Others are asked to accept the gift as from a mighty sovereign. The Congress High Command declares that they will redress the grievances of the Muslims, and they expect the Muslims to accept the declaration. I want to make it plain to all concerned that we Muslims want no gifts. The Muslims want no concessions. We Muslims of India have made up our minds

to have our fullest rights but we shall have them as rights, not as gifts or concessions. As I have said before, there are four forces at play in this country. Firstly, there is the British Government. Secondly, there are the rulers and people of the Indian States. Thirdly, there are the Hindus and, fourthly, there are Muslims. The Congress press may clamour as much as it likes, they may bring out their morning, afternoon, evening and night editions, the Congress leaders may cry as much as they like that Congress is a national body. But I say it is not true. The Congress is nothing but a Hindu body. That is the truth and the Congress leaders know it. The presence of the few Muslims—the few misled and misguided ones and the few who are there with ulterior motives—does not, cannot make it a national body. I challenge anybody to deny that the Congress is mainly a Hindu body. I ask, does the Congress represent the Muslims? I ask, does the Congress represent the Christians? I ask, does the Congress represent the scheduled castes? I ask, does the Congress represent the non-Brahmans? I say the Congress does not even represent all the Hindus. What about the Hindu Mahasabha? What about the Liberal Federation? The Congress, no doubt, is the largest single party in the country. But it is nothing more than that. It may arrogate to itself whatever titles it likes; the Congress High Command, in the intoxication of power,

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like persons who are drunk, may make any claims it pleases them to make. But such claims cannot alter the true character of the Congress. It remains what it is—mainly a Hindu body."

Proceeding, the League President declared that he had no hesitation in saying that the genius behind the Congress attitude and the Congress policy was no other than Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi who was out to destroy the ideal with which the Congress was started. He was the one man responsible for turning the Congress into an instrument for the revival of Hinduism. His ideal was to revive Hindu religion and establish Hindu Raj in India, and he was utilising the Congress to further this object.

Of the outcome of the Patna League Session two things must be mentioned. A resolution for direct action against the atrocities committed by the Congress Governments on the Musalmans was tabled before the League session and occupied most of the time of the League. The word "atrocities" is no exaggeration. The provinces concerned were asking for an authority to be given to them for such an action. But Mohammad Ali Jinnah's political sagacity would not allow it as he foreshadowed a complete rift between the Hindus and Muslims which was not in the larger interests of India, and he argued with the

Subjects Committee. Finally his arguments carried the day and authority was vested in the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League for emergency action.

The second important outcome of this session was the appointment of a Ladies' Sub-Committee, which was entirely due to the efforts of Jinnah himself. But the reader will have occasion to learn about this later.

It now looked like a game of hide-and-seek between the Congress and the League. The Congress leaders were out to justify every action of the Congress. The League President was bent upon exposing them. Mohammad Ali Jinnah was now sure of his ground and also of his strength. A series of events in the shape of Wardha scheme of Education, the Rajkot affair, the Shia-Sunni dispute at Lucknow, Hyderabad *Satyagraha* and scores of other vexations had convinced the bulk of Muslim opinion that the Congress had no intention of respecting the feelings of Muslims. All this had driven the Congress to a state of desperation and it was feeling uncomfortable in its position. Gandhi had already started writing about his failures and blunders, and he frequently hinted at the Congress corruption, deprecating the use of the police and military in support of the Congress Ministries for the conduct of their normal activities. In fact, Gandhi had realised that if the Congress

was allowed to continue in office the whole organisation might tumble down like a house or cards, and he was bidding his time to get a suitable opportunity to retrace his steps and enable the Congress, once more, to gain its lost prestige.

Mohammad Ali Jinnah also was not quite satisfied with his position. His exposition of the Congress game, although purely in self-defence, was not without benefit to the forces of British Imperialism who were also waiting to make use of every grain that might be available. Jinnah was, therefore, between the devil and deep sea, and under the circumstances he had no alternative but to conduct a double-sided battle against the Congress and the British Government. During his speech on the Finance Bill in March 1939 he made the position of the League clear and once for all told the officialdom that they could not expect the Muslims to play to their tune. " Sir, in the past," said he, " we have been following the principle that if the Government brought in a measure which was really for the good of the people, then we would support it. If it is not in the interests of the people we would oppose it. But, Sir, I see now that that policy must be altered. It really means this, that we are reduced to this position. When the Congress is right, 'support the Congress.' When the Government is right, 'support the Government.' But when we are right,

nobody supports us. Sir, we feel, therefore, and I want to ask the Government, what has been your policy? What has been your attitude? And what have been your actions so far as my Party is concerned? I am glad that the Finance Member in his long speech said, 'remember Cawnpore, remember Benares, remember Budaon,' but I can tell this House that there are many other places in this country where even the elementary rights of Muslims have been trampled upon; and what have the Government done? I remember reading, Sir, not long ago, a speech made by Mr. Vallabhbhai Patel in which he said: 'There cannot be any basis for all these allegations, for all these complaints of ill-treatment, injustice, tyranny and persecution. The simple reason is that if there was any such thing, surely the Governors would have intervened.' And I think Mr. Bhulabhai Desai very recently made a speech and he relied upon the same argument, namely, that if there was an iota of truth in these baseless allegations that we were making, surely the Governors would not have been sitting tight and would have immediately intervened. Therefore, because the Governors have not intervened, my Honourable friend is satisfied."

Jinnah drew the attention of the House to the happenings in Palestine, Waziristan, Jaipur and other places and enquired: "Where is the Paramount Power? What is the Para-

mnunt Power doing ? I am not asking that you should intervene for the purpose of putting pressure upon the Indian States or to force them into undertaking ' constitutional reforms, ' but this is a fundamental and basic principle of maintaining civilised administration. Is this fairplay and justice done to the elementary rights of citizens ? Sir, I can give instances after instances, but I do not want to waste the time of the House, and, besides, this is not the occasion for it. Why do you expect us, I ask the Government, to draw the chestnuts out of the fire on year behalf ? Why do you expect us to continue to be subservient on the specious pleas which you put forward before us ? We have, therefore, so far as the Government are concerned, made up our mind that we will render no assistance to you so far as this Finance Bill is concerned. You may go on your own way. On the other hand, as regards the Congress Party, I do not want on this occasion to go into details, but I do maintain that the Congress Party is not only hostile to the Muslim League but they are inimical. Therefore, I say to them that co-operation between you and us is not possible. But they will say : 'all right, we are the largest number here.' Yes, you may be the largest number ; you may be more advanced ; you may be stronger economically, and you may think that the counting of heads is the final jugnment. But let me tell you—and I tell both of you—that you alone or this

organisation alone or both combined will never succeed in destroying our souls. You will never be able to destroy that culture which we have inherited, the Islamic culture, and that spirit will live, is going to live and has lived. You may overpower us ; you may oppress us ; and you can do your worst. But we have come to the conclusion and we have now made a grim resolve that we shall go down, if we have to go down, fighting. Therefore, the position is this. I make this protest as a first step—a solemn protest, a declaration on the floor of the House as to what our attitude is with regard to this Finance Bill. Our hearts are singed and burnt ; our blood is boiling ; we shall suffer and we shall go through fire. The attitude that we are going to take is this. We are not going to move any amendment. Do what you like with your Bill. We are not going to support any amendment moved by the Congress Party or any other Party. Possibly, the result of it would be that the Government will be defeated and the Congress will win, because, I know, they have got a sufficient majority if we remain neutral as we are going to remain neutral. But I tell my Congress friends that your victory will not go beyond the little room called the lobby. If you have any sense of satisfaction in having won, you may have it. Your true victory and your real victory will be when you will stretch your hand across and remove the barrier between this

Party and that Party. Therefore, we have definitely decided not to vote for any of the amendments by whomsoever moved. We are not going to support the Government, because the British Government has failed even to secure us our elementary rights of citizenship, and those special powers which were assumed under the guise of the Governors and the Governor-General being the protectors and the trustees of minorities have proved to be a fraud, worse than a fraud. I myself, therefore, do not wish to take any further part in this debate. But it is open to the members of my Party that they can freely express their opinion as to the merits of the amendments for the purpose of enlightening the Finance Member of the Government of India. As far as the Finance Bill is concerned it is his and of the Congress Party. You take the responsibility and do what you like with it."

The progress of the League was nevertheless proceeding at great speed. Musalmans, throughout India, had realised that they had ultimately to depend upon their own inherent strength. Every important leader had come back to the fold of the League. Provincial workers had already been busy chalking out programmes for the amelioration of the conditions of Muslims. Thinkers were busy formulating schemes of educational, industrial and social reforms. Jinnah was flooded with letters from all parts of India

containing suggestions and opinions supported with facts and figures. The rule of the Congress Governments in some provinces had given considerable impetus to the idea of separate nationhood for Muslims. The Sind Conference had also encouraged the thought. Those Muslims who thought, under the influence of the Congress, that Mohammad Ali Jinnah was leading the Musalmans merely out of a spite against the Congress and not in their real interest were slowly being convinced of the sincerity of the League and the League President. He had successfully repudiated the charge that the League was a body of the henchmen of the foreign rulers, and Muslim intelligentsia was slowly but steadily being attracted to the League. Serious thinking had already started, and early in the year 1939 no less than five schemes of Pakistan were published from different quarters laying down principles and details of the future constitution according to their conceptions.

The question that was uppermost in Jinnah's mind was that of the Federal part of the Indian Constitution. Gandhi's silence on this point for some time past was suspected by Musalmans to mean that the Congress might ultimately accept the Federation. The question, therefore, naturally arose as to what the Muslim position would be then. Hitherto the Congress and the British Government

both treated the Muslim League with indifference and it was feared that there might be another gentlemen's agreement between Gandhi and the Viceroy in this connection. The Muslim leader had to keep his eyes open and watch the situation with no little alarm. A number of political conferences were, therefore, held throughout India and Muslims expressed their unequivocal disapproval of the Federal Scheme and warned the Government that any decision without the consent and approval of the Muslims of India would be utterly disastrous.

Apart from this, Mohammad Ali Jinnah's attention was being engaged by other important matters. The Palestine question had not been solved and Musalmans were pressing him to help in the speedy settlement of this question. The war clouds hovering over the world due to the deterioration of the international situation in Europe had made matters worse and the progress that Muslims of India were making under the banner of the All-India Muslim League was likely to be obstructed. At home, in India, the Congress was now resorting to the extraordinary tactics of "contacting" the Provincial leaders of the League for piecemeal pacts without any reference to Mohammad Ali Jinnah and without attempting to arrive at a settlement on an All-India basis. The policy was pursued through the agency of Maulana

Abul Kalam Azad, Congress President. The Congress High Command perhaps thought that it would be easy to corrupt and placate the League leaders in the provinces and thus to undermine the authority of the League President. Mohammad Ali Jinnah naturally resented this attitude and at the first opportunity exposed the Congress once more. British reactionaries were also not quiet. They were inciting the Muslim provinces where provincial governments were also working under Muslim Premiers, most important of them being the Punjab, that in the event of the League taking up a firm attitude about the war, they should stand aloof and give full support to war effort, and Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan had for a number of times issued statements to the press and made public announcements that could be taken as militating against the League and its authority. Capital was made out of Sir Sikandar's public utterances by the Congress and the Hindu press to show that Punjab was revolting against the League and that it was not the authoritative and tepresentative organisation of Musalmans of India.

In short, there was now a complete clash between the League and the Congress and the two organisations were fighting openly against each other—the former for self-assertion and upholding its rights, and the

latter for complete supremacy in Akhand Hindustan or paramountcy for Hindus in the whole of India.

CHAPTER XXIII

THE WAR

The declaration of war on the 3rd of September, 1939, by Great Britain and France on Germany brought India to the threshold of a new era. His Excellency the Viceroy simultaneously declared war on Germany on behalf of India and in a broadcast speech made an appeal for unity. Lord Linlithgow immediately invited Gandhi and Jinnah to discuss with them the possibility of evolving a system by which a united effort for the prosecution of war could be ensured. On the 11th His Excellency addressed the Central Legislature and read out a message from His Majesty the King. The Viceroy, once again, appealed for unity and declared that the Federal part of the Government of India Act of 1935 was suspended. The suspension of Federation was undoubtedly decided upon by the British Government as a gesture of goodwill so that India's co-operation in the stupendous task of waging the war against Germany could be obtained with the consent of the Indian peoples, and that is why Lord Linlithgow went out of his way to emphasise the need for unity among the different elements of India's political life. But as far as the Congress was concerned, the appeal

of the Viceroy went as much unheeded as those of Mohammad Ali Jinnah during the past few years.

The growing popularity among the Muslims of the idea of their being a separate nation had been received not without a protest by the Congress leaders, particularly by Gandhi. The only way, to nip it in the bud, was to accept the Federation as contemplated by the Act of 1935. But the previous utterances of Gandhi had made it impossible for the Congress to decide in favour of such a course in an offhand manner. Ground had to be prepared to enable the Congress to retrace its steps, and Gandhi was busy over doing so. The announcement of the Viceroy, therefore, that Federation was suspended, came as a rude shock to Gandhi and the Hindu Congress, and while the League welcomed the suspension the Congress had to swallow it as a bitter pill without uttering a single word of opposition.

For the Musalmans the position was quite clear. With the reorientation of Muslim opinion under the able leadership of Mohammad Ali Jinnah, who had won as a mark of appreciation and respect a title of Qaide Azam (the great leader) from the Musalmans, the problems and questions confronting the Muslims had tended to separate themselves from those that confronted the

Hindus. The past experiences of Muslims during Congress rule in the provinces had made it absolutely necessary for them to insist on safeguarding their position in the future scheme of things, especially in the abnormal conditions created by the war.

The Working Committees of the Congress as well as of the League met soon after the declaration of war to review the situation and passed lengthy resolutions. The Congress complained that India had been declared a belligerent country without the consent of the people of India " whose declared wishes in such matters have been deliberately ignored by the British Government." It declared its " entire disapproval of the ideology and practice of Fascism and Nazism and their glorification of war and violence and the suspension of the human spirit." The Congress Committee " further laid down that the issue of war and peace for India must be decided by the Indian people, and no outside authority can impose this decision upon them, nor can the Indian people permit their resources to be exploited for imperialist ends." The Congress demanded that Britain should state what her war aims were, and put forward the claim that India should be immediately declared independent and the right of self-determination should be granted to her in order to frame a constitution for her through a Constituent Assembly based on adult

franchise.

The League Working Committee on the other hand passed the following resolution : "The Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League appreciate the course adopted by his Excellency the Viceroy in inviting Mr. M. A. Jinhah, President of the All-India Muslim League, and apprising him of the international situation resulting in war, and his own views, to be conveyed to the Muslim League. The Working Committee have given their most earnest consideration to his Excellency the Viceroy's views conveyed to them by the President and also to the pronouncement made by the Viceroy since the declaration of war by Great Britain as also his Excellency's address to the Members of the Central Legislature on the 11th of September, 1939.

"The Committee are of opinion that the views expressed by the Council of the All-India Muslim League by its resoultion No. 8 of the 27th of August, 1939, in the following words—'While deploring the policy of the British Government towards the Muslims of India by attempting to force upon them against their will a Constitution, and in particular the Federal Scheme as embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935, which allows a permanent hostile communal majority to trample upon their religious, political, social and economic rights and the utter

neglect and indifference shown by the Viceroy and the Governors in the Congress-governed provinces in exercising their special powers to protect and secure justice to the minorities; and towards the Arabs in Palestine in refusing to meet their demands, holds the view that in these circumstances if the British Government desires to enlist the support and the sympathy of the Muslims of the world, and particularly of the Indian Muslims in future contingencies it must meet the demands of the Muslims of India without delay,'—are the true sentiments and opinions of the Musalmans of India.

"The Working Committee appreciate the declaration of his Excellency the Viceroy, which is in the interest of India and particularly the Musalmans, that the Federal Scheme embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935, has been suspended. They wish that instead of its being suspended it had been abandoned completely and desire to convey to His Majesty's Government that they should do so without further delay. The Committee desire to make it clear that they do not endorse the 'Federal objective' of his Majesty's Government referred to by his Excellency in his address to the members of the Central Legislature and strongly urge upon the British Government to review and revise the entire problem of India's future Constitution *de novo* in the light of the experience

gained by the working of the present provincial constitution of India and developments that have taken place since 1935 or may take place hereafter.

"The Committee in this connection wish to point out that Muslim India occupies a special and peculiar position in the policy of India and for several decades it had hoped to occupy an honourable place in the national life, government and administration of the country and worked for free India with Free and Independent Islam in which they could play an equal part with the major community with complete sense of security for their religious, political, cultural, social and economic rights and interests; but the developments that have taken place, and specially since the inauguration of the provincial constitution based on the so-called democratic parliamentary system of government, and the recent experiences of over two years have established beyond doubt that it has resulted wholly in a permanent communal majority and the domination of the Hindus over the Muslim minorities whose life and liberty, property and honour are in danger and even their religious rights and culture are being assailed and annihilated every day under the Congress Governments in various provinces.

"That while Muslim India stands against exploitation of the people of India and has

repeatedly declared in favour of 'Free India' it is equally opposed to the domination of Hindu majority over Musalmans and other minorities and vassalisation of Muslim India and is irrevocably opposed to any 'federal objective' which must necessarily result in a majority community rule under the guise of democracy and parliamentary system of government. Such a constitution is totally unsuited to the genius of the peoples of the country which is composed of various nationalities and does not constitute a national state.

"The Muslim League condemns unprovoked aggression and the doctrine that 'might is right' and upholds the principles of freedom of humanity and 'that the will of the strongest irrespective of right and justice cannot be allowed to prevail.' The Committee express their deep sympathy for Poland, England and France. The Committee, however, feel that real and solid Muslim co-operation and support to Great Britain in this hour of her trial cannot be secured successfully if His Majesty's Government and the Viceroy are unable to secure to the Musalmans justice and fairplay in the Congress-governed provinces where today their liberty, persons, property and honour are in danger and even their elementary rights are most callously trampled upon. The Committee strongly urge upon His Majesty's Government and the Viceroy and

Governor-General to direct the Governors to exercise their special powers, where any provincial ministry fails to secure justice and fairplay to the Musalmans or where they resort to oppression or interference with their political, economic, social and cultural rights, in accordance with the sacred promises, assurances and declarations repeatedly made by Great Britain in consequence of which these special powers were expressly embodied in the Statute. The Committee regret to say that so far these special powers have remained dormant and obsolete and the Governors have failed to protect the rights of the Musalmans under the threat by the 'High Command' of the Congress that exercise of these special powers on the part of the Governors will lead to crises in all the Congress-governed provinces, where they are in a solid majority.

" While the Muslim League stands for the freedom of India the Committee further urge upon His Majesty's Government and ask for an assurance that no declaration regarding the question of constitutional advance for India should be made without the consent and approval of the All-India Muslim League nor any constitution be framed and finally adopted by His Majesty's Government and the British Parliament without such consent and approval.

"The policy of the British Government towards the Arabs in Palestine has wounded deeply Muslim feeling and sentiment and all representations in that behalf have had no real effect so far. The Committee once more urge upon His Majesty's Government to satisfy the Arab National demands.

"If full, effective and honourable co-operation of the Musalmans is desired by the British Government in the grave crisis which is facing the world today and if it is desired to bring the war to a successful termination it must create a sense of security and satisfaction amongst the Musalmans and take into its confidence the Muslim League which is the only organisation that can speak on behalf of Muslim India.

"At this critical and difficult juncture the Committee appeal to every Musalman to stand solidly under the flag of the All-India Muslim League with a solemn and sacred determination to make every sacrifice for on it depend the future destiny and the honour of the ninety millions of Musalmans of India."

It is clear from the above that as the outlook of the two organisations differed on fundamentals, their decisions regarding the war were bound to be different and their respective views on the problem were naturally in

conflict with each other. But while the Muslim League proceeded to suggest and demand remedies for the wrong already done to Muslims of India and while it asked for safeguards for them, the Congress went out of its way to propose things on the assumption that it represented the whole of India, without paying any attention to the views of the League. Such an attitude, therefore, was bound to aggravate Muslim feelings. To Mohammad Ali Jinnah, however, the Congress policy was the ruin of its own self, and the League leader strongly believed that the growing strength of the League would ultimately compel the Congress to realise that without the support of the Musalmans nothing could be done. He had an unflinching faith in the prospects of a Hindu-Muslim settlement which would result when Musalmans were sufficiently organised. Speaking on the occasion of the annual dinner of the Old Boys of the Osmania University, on the 28th of September 1939, Mohammad Ali Jinnah expressed this hope in the following words: "I did not expect that, even at this festive board where a galaxy of intellects have assembled, I would be involved in discussing political problems confronting India. But as reference has been made to the matter, I must assure you that I yield to none in the determination to safeguard the interests of my country, nor would I yield to anybody in striving for the attainment of freedom for my country. I am essentially a

practical man, I have been in practical politics for over a quarter of a century. The words 'nationalism' and 'nationalist' have undergone many changes in their definition and significance. Some people have a dictionary of their own, but within the honest meaning of the term, I still remain a nationalist. I have always believed in a Hindu-Muslim pact. But such a pact can only be an honourable one and not a pact which will mean the destruction of one and the survival of the other. The Congress High Command, unfortunately, are not prepared to grasp the hand of friendship, but would like to destroy the very hand which offered friendship. One does not see much light at present but you never can say when the two communities would unite. I say to every Musalman that Islam expects you, one and all, to do your duty and stand by your people as one nation."

On the 22nd October 1939 the Congress asked its ministries to resign on the plea that they could not carry on in view of the unsatisfactory attitude of the British Government towards India and consequently Section 93 of the Indian Constitution came into operation in most of the Congress provinces. It was now the turn of Mohammad Ali Jinnah to strike and prove to the world that the Congress did not in fact represent the Muslims, and on the 2nd of December after careful consideration he issued an appeal

to Muslims that the 22nd of December should be celebrated as the " day of deliverance and thanksgiving as a mark of relief that the Congress regime has at last ceased to function." Consequently, Musalmans celebrated the Day of Deliverance throughout the length and breadth of India and various other parties who were mainly non-Muslim, collaborated with them. The overwhelming success of this bold move baffled the Congress High Command and for a time the Hindus did not know what to do. Gandhi wrote an article in the *Harijan* and forwarded an advance copy to Jinnah, who sent the following reply on the New Year's day of the year 1940.

"I am in receipt of your letter of 16th December and the advance copy of the article you have sent to the *Harijan*. I not only thank you for your courtesy but also for your anxiety to further the end you have been reading in my messages and actions. I, however, regret to have to say that your premises are wrong as you start with the theory of an Indian Nation that does not exist, and naturally, therefore, your conclusions are wrong. I should have thought, however, that you at least would not be led away by one-sided newspaper reports and canards. There is so much in your article which is the result of imagination. It is due partly to the fact that you are living

a secluded life at Segaon, and partly because all your thoughts and actions are guided by 'inner voice.' You have very little concern with realities, or what might be termed by an ordinary mortal 'practical politics.' I sometimes wonder what can be common between practical politics and yourself, between democracy and the dictator of a political organisation of which he is not even a four-anna member. But that is, I suppose, because you do not consider the Congress worthy of your membership.

"I am glad to learn that you were not ruffled by the 'Deliverance Day' greetings sent to you from Gulbarga. It was indeed noble of you to join in the silent prayer, 'Long live Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah!' Although these are trivial matters, I nevertheless appreciate that you have realised the true inward meaning and significance of the 'Deliverance Day'.

"It is true that many non-Congress Hindus expressed their sympathy with the Deliverance Day in justice to our cause, so also the leaders of the Justice Party and the Scheduled Castes, and the Parsis who had suffered. But I am afraid that the meaning which you have tried to give to this alignment shows that you have not appreciated the true significance of it. It was partly a case of 'adversity bringing strange bedfellows together,' and partly because common interest may lead

Muslims and minorities to combine. I have no illusions in the matter, and let me say again that India is not a nation, nor a country. It is a sub-continent composed of nationalities, Hindus and Muslims being the two major nations. Today you deny that religion can be a main factor in determining a nation, but you yourself, when asked what your motive in life was, 'the thing that leads us to do what we do', whether it was religious, or social, or political, said: 'Purely religious.' This was the question asked me by the late Mr. Montagu when I accompanied a deputation which was purely political. "How you, a social reformer," he exclaimed, "have found your way into this crowd?" My reply was that it was only extension of my social activity. I could not be leading a religious life unless I identified myself with the whole of mankind, and that I could not do unless I took part in politics. The gamut of man's activities today constitutes an indivisible whole. You cannot divide social, economic, political and purely religious work into watertight compartments. I do not know any religion apart from human activity. It provides a moral basis to all other activities which they would otherwise lack, reducing life to a maze of "sound and fury signifying nothing."

"More than any one else, you happen to be the man today who commands the confidence of Hindu India and is in a position

to deliver the goods on their behalf. Is it too much to hope and expect that you might play your legitimate role and abandon your chase after a mirage? Events are moving fast, a campaign of polemics, or your weekly discourse in the *Harijan* on metaphysics, philosophy and ethics, or your peculiar doctrines regarding *khaddar, ahimsa* and spinning are not going to win India's freedom. Action and statesmanship alone will help us in our forward march. I believe that you might still rise to your stature in the service of our country and make your proper contribution towards leading India to contentment and happiness.

"Lastly, I thank you for your anxiety to respect my wishes in the matter of prefix you should use with my name. What is in a prefix after all, a rose called by any other name smells just as sweet. So I leave the matter entirely to you, and have no particular wish in the matter. I really do not know why you are worried so much about it. I, however, notice that the present prefix you are using is according to the usage taught to you by the late Hakim Sahib. But, surprisingly enough, during his lifetime and till long after his death, you addressed me as *Mr.*, then quite recently you addressed me as *Shree*, and in between as *friend*, but please do not bother about this matter."

The opinions expressed by the League Working Committee were put forward before the Viceroy, when Jinnah met him. They were, as Jinnah himself said later, fivefold. One of these demands, it seemed, had been misunderstood by the Viceroy. The League had asked that Indian troops should not be used against any Muslim power or country outside India. This did not imply that Indian troops were not to be used for the defence of India. If any country attacked India, the Indian army had to fight to safeguard Indian boundaries. The League had also demanded a clear statement on behalf of the British Government that the present Act of 1935 would go lock, stock and barrel, and the entire scheme of constitutional reform would be examined *de novo* in the light of experience gained from the working of the Constitution during the last two and a half years, and in the light of experience which might be gained in future. Another demand of the League was that Muslims would not agree to any declaration or enactment of any constitution, unless their consent had been obtained for it, nor was any interim settlement to be made under threat or at the behest of any other party, however strong it was, without the previous approval of the Muslims. The fourth demand was for the settlement of the Arab question and Jinnah urged on behalf of the League that "endeavours to reach a settlement" would not do, and the British Govern-

ment must reach a settlement to the satisfaction of the Arabs forthwith. The last demand of the League related to the Muslim grievances in the Congress-governed provinces. It was true that the Governor-General could not intervene when the Congress Ministries did not exist. The question, however, had two aspects. " Firstly, we made it abundantly clear that the Muslims had been oppressed in the Congress-governed provinces, and members of the League were made special targets. The Congress High Command characterised these statements as false, but was willing to set up a judicial tribunal. That proposal was absurd for reasons already given. On the other hand I offered to accept a Royal Commission consisting of two Judges of the English High Court and presided over by a Lord of the Privy Council. Such a tribunal, completely detached from the poisoned atmosphere of the country, and equipped with the necessary powers to examine witnesses on oath and compel the production of documents, was the only one that could have done justice. But that proposal was treated by the Congress with derision on the ground that we were invoking foreign aid in our domestic affairs, as if Sir Maurice Gwyer, proposed by them, was a *Swadeshi* or born in Wardha!" The second aspect of the question was whether the High Command caucus ministries were again to be put into office. The Deliverance Day demonstrations had amply shown how every section

of the people outside the Congress was opposed to the Congress rule, including the Hindus who were members of the Hindu Mahasabha and " who prayed with us from the League platform on the Deliverance Day."

To all these demands made by Mohammad Ali Jinnah on hehalf of Musalmans of India the Viceroy, in his letter of 23rd of December 1939, addressed to the Muslim leader, replied as follows: " I am now in a position to reply to your letter of November 5th, in which you submitted certain points for my consideration. You will, I am sure, appreciate that more than one of your questions, if considerd in the light of all the implications involved in it, would raise issues affecting other communities in India, and that this correspondence between us would not be an appropriate medium for making pronouncements on them. But I hope that my answers, limited though their scope may be by this consideration, will nonetheless serve to remove your difficulties.

"My answer to your first question is that the declaration I made with the approval of His Majesty's Government on October 18th last does not exclude examination of any part either of the Act of 1935 or of the policy and plans on which it is based.

" With reference to your second point,

I can assure you that His Majesty's Government are not under any misapprehension as to the importance of the contentment of the Muslim community to the stability and success of any constitutional developments in India. You need therefore have no fear that the weight which your community's position in India necessarily gives their views will be underrated.

"In framing their policy for Palestine, His Majesty's Government have endeavoured to meet all reasonable Arab demands, and they continue to be fully alive to the importance of that issue.

"Finally, you asked for an assurance that Indian troops will not be used outside India against any Muslim Power or country. This question is fortunately hypothetical, since His Majesty is not at war with any Muslim power. You will appreciate, however, that it is impossible to give a guarantee in terms so wide as those of your letter, which would have the effect of limiting India's right to use its own army in its own defence in circumstances which cannot now be foreseen ; in the present situation, however, as you are aware, every precaution has been taken by His Majesty's Government at the instance of the Government of India to ensure that Muslim feeling in India on this matter is fully respected."

In the meantime, the Congress having put forward a suggestion that the question of the future constitution of India should be decided by a Constituent Assembly and Gandhi on behalf of the Congress conducted the usual propaganda in foreign countries and a studied programme of vilification was launched in India against the League and the Muslim leader. Muslim India had no press of its own, and in view of the biased news that reached England and other foreign countries public opinion abroad did not gain a very happy impression about the Musalmans. There was no effective machinery within the League to combat these forces and the onus of counteracting all these manoeuvres fell solely on Mohammad Ali Jinnah himself.

A study of the various statements that Jinnah issued to the foreign press during this time are worthy of note as they give the reader some idea as to how uncalled-for attacks were levelled against the Musalmans and through what stages they were passing. The following is the text of the statement given to a representative of the *Manchester Guardian* : "I am obliged to the *Manchester Guardian* for the courtesy shown to me in giving me an opportunity to place my views briefly before the British public. It is difficult to make an average Englishman understand fully the position which is facing us Muslims today. But I shall mention a few salient

points which will give some idea of the difficulties that are confronting us. The Muslims have always had their fears and apprehensions of even a representative form of government, and far more of democracy, in its strict application to India. Since the time of the Minto-Morley Reforms of 1908 and the historical Lucknow Pact between Hindus and Muslims in 1916, their insistence on separate electorates, weightage and statutory safeguards have been a clear indication of those fears. But, since the inauguration of the new provincial constitutions, it has been established beyond doubt, particularly by the way in which the Congress High Command has pursued its policies and progammes, that the sole aim and object of the Congress is to annihilate every other organisation in the country, and to set itself up as a Fascist and authoritarian organisation of the worst type.

"Having regard to the 35 millions of voters, the bulk of whom are totally ignorant, illiterate and untutored, living in centuries-old superstitions of the worst type, thoroughly antagonistic to each other, culturally and socially, the working of this constitution has clearly brought out that it is impossible to work a democratic parliamentary Government in India. It has definitely resulted in a permanent Communal majority Government ruling over minorities, exercising its powers and

functions and utilising the machinery of Government to establish the domination and supremacy of the majority communal rule over the minorities. Therefore, in my judgment, apart from other reasons into which I need not go in detail, democracy can only mean Hindu Raj all over India. This is a position to which Muslims will never submit. Besides, there are 60 million of untouchables and other minorities such as six million Christians, Jews, Parsis and the Domiciled British. Therefore, the Muslim League, after very careful consideration, has come to the conclusion that the entire problem of India's future constitution must be considered; and that no declaration or commitment should be made by His Majesty's Government without the approval and consent of the Muslim League which is the only authoritative and representative organisation of the Muslims of India.

"The British public may be misled by certain propaganda that the Muslims are against the freedom of India. We want freedom and liberty, but the question is, whose freedom and liberty? Muslim India wants to be free and enjoy liberty to the fullest extent and develop its own political, economic, social and cultural institutions according to its own genius, and not to be dominated and crushed, while wishing Hindu India well and giving it fullest scope to do likewise. I know that the Englishman who

has developed in his own country a system of parliamentary government cannot think of anything else but what has worked and been developed through the centuries as the only pattern for every other country in the world. But he must dismiss from his mind the experiments tried in Canada and Australia, where after all the foundations of Government are suited to the genius of the people, mainly British in stock. It is very doubtful as to how it will work in South Africa where there are two powerful rival communities like the Boers and the British, and even here the differences between them are not so fundamental as those between Hindus and Muslims. Even Ireland, after decades of union, did not submit to the British Parliament in spite of the close affinity with the English and Scotch. I may refer to Lord Morley's dictum that the fur coat of Canada would not do for the extremely tropical climate of India.

"The Congress insistence that they, and they alone, represent the people of India is not only without any foundation, but is highly detrimental to the progress and advancement of India. They know that they do not represent the whole of India, not even all the Hindus, and certainly not the Muslims, who are often wrongly described as a minority in the ordinary sense as understood in the West. They are in a majority in the North-West and in Bengal, all along the corridor stretching

from Karachi to Calcutta. That part of the Indian continent alone has double the population of Great Britain and is more than ten times in area. Until the Congress come down to earth and face realities, they will be wholly responsible for blocking the progress of India, and unless they give up the Fascist and authoritarian basis of their policy and programme which they are vigorously following, there cannot be any peace in India."

Jinnah was then asked for his views regarding certain schemes put forward by Muslim League leaders like Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan and his proposal for Coalition Ministries in the provinces, representing the Congress and the Muslim League. Jinnah said: "There are many proposals and schemes and importance is attached to these schemes, particularly to the one suggested by Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan in view of the position he holds in the League and as the Premier of the Punjab. Although his proposals may create an impression that they have emanated indirectly from the Muslim League, I want to make it clear that the League is not responsible for any of them directly or indirectly. As a matter of fact, we have appointed a sub-committee to examine the whole question thoroughly and when this sub-committee has made its report it will be examined by the Working Committee of the League in order to take such

steps as it may think proper. Until that stage has been reached, the Muslim League feels in no way bound by any schemes or proposals that are propounded by various people."

During the close of the year 1939 Gandhi gave an interview to an American journalist and in reply to a question as to what his view was towards the parties in a democratic India, Gandhi said that there was only one party which could deliver the goods, and that was the Congress. Told that there was the Muslim League, Gandhi said: "I would not accept any other party except the Congress." Then it was pointed out to him that if there was to be only one party in India the Government would be Fascist and not democratic. Gandhi replied: "Damn it, by whatever name you may call it, there can be only one party in India, and that is the Congress." Such a statement putting powerful elements in the political life of India completely out of the picture could naturally not go unchallenged and when Gandhi gave an interview to the *News Chronicle* on Constituent Assembly, Mohammad Ali Jinnah issued the following statement: "I would have preferred to remain silent, but I am compelled to contrast the vigorous one-sided propaganda of the Congress, both in India and abroad, and, in fact, it is only to defend the Muslim League that I speak at all."

Mohammad Ali Jinnah regretted very much that Gandhi and the Congress leadership should continue in their attitude which could only bring harm to India. Analysing Gandhi's frame of mind Jinnah said: "Suddenly Mr. Gandhi, who was always sceptical about the Constituent Assembly, has now become an enthusiastic convert and its champion. He has been misrepresenting and insinuating motives to the Muslim League recently, for instance, that the League is an obstacle to the progress of the country and is out to sell itself to the highest bidder, in his periodical articles published in the *Harijan*. He generally indulges in a campaign of polemics and metaphysics, *ahimsa* and truth. But his interview to the *News Chronicle* is for the consumption of the British public. A more disingenuous statement it would be difficult to find, coming from Mr. Gandhi, and it is a pity it comes from one who is a votary of truth. His sudden affection for the Constituent Assembly is on a par with what he has only striven to do for two decades. The opinion that counts is Indian opinion, not even Congress opinion. India's opinion can be ascertained by the free vote of her people. The only true and democratic method is to ascertain their will through adult suffrage, or any agreed equivalent.

"The first question will be when he

says, 'any agreed equivalent to adult suffrage', between whom is that agreement to be arrived at? Secondly, if Britain is not to depend on Muslims, Hindus or any other opinion, not even Congress opinion, then what is India's opinion? Now that the Congress stands exposed, that it does not represent India and that it is really a Hindu body, Mr. Gandhi is pleased suddenly to stand for a Constituent Assembly, which, in the present condition of India, will mean a second and larger edition of the Congress. Having brushed aside the Indian Princes, ignoring their existence altogether, he (Mr. Gandhi) proceeds to lay down a most extraordinary proposition. 'I fail to see', he says, 'why Britain's intention about India should be dependent upon Muslim, Hindu or any other opinion'. Mr. Gandhi then proceeds to say, 'so far as the Congress is concerned, the people of the Indian States should be represented precisely on the same footing as those of British India.' Who will arrange that? And how are electorates to be established there? And what is to happen to the Treaty rights and relationships between the British Government and the Indian Princes?

"Then he proceeds: 'Muslims and other accepted minorities may be represented by separate electorates, if necessary.' This is a concession, but there is no grace in it

when he further proceeds to state that it should be done in the exact proportion to their numbers. He knows perfectly well that they will be in a hopeless minority in the Constituent Assembly of Mr. Gandhi's conception where he hopes to get a brute majority against the Muslims, including other minorities. He makes a further concession that 'they will determine what is required for their protection'. Is the Constituent Assembly to be bound by the minority vote as to what is required for their protection and for each minority? And then comes the omnibus clause, which is fundamentally wrong, and once more shows blind arrogance, when he says that in all matters of common interest the composite majority decision should prevail. Therefore, the Muslims and other minorities will have to submit to the verdict of the Assembly as to the nature, character and the form of the future Constitution of India, which will presumably be dictated by Mr. Gandhi on behalf of the Congress, as for instance, Muslims and other minorities may prefer a bicameral legislature, whereas the Congress-controlled majority of the Assembly may decide against it—which, according to Mr. Gandhi, will be final.

"But evidently his new-born faith in the Constituent Assembly is getting shaken a bit already, because he says if a better way than the Constituent Assembly could be found for

knowing the will of the people, so far as I know, the Congress will accept it without hesitation. Mr. Gandhi is neither concerned with the size of the country nor the illiteracy of the masses. A truly representative Assembly presupposes that in order faithfully to express the judgment of the people it can only be constituted if you have a fully developed public opinion, an electorate educated and experienced, free from superstition and capable of judging the vital political issues affecting the country, and not as India stands today, composed of castes, creeds, superstitions and provincial jealousies quite apart from the main division of British India and the Indian states. The Assembly proposed by Mr. Gandhi would at best, therefore, be a packed body manoeuvred and managed by the Congress caucus. It is surprising when Mr. Gandhi complacently says that an election campaign will itself be sufficient education for the purpose of broadly knowing the popular will. But, have we not had sufficient evidence, under the present constitution, though in smaller and more informed electorates? And what about the experience of the Congress (with its four-anna franchise) of abuses of power and malpractices which were eloquently condemned by Mr. Gandhi himself? It will not be the 'popular will', as Mr. Gandhi professes, but it will be the will of one community, which is in an overwhelming majority.

"But he is anxious, 'as a friend of Britain bound by many personal ties', that she should come out victorious not because of superiority in the use of arms but because of her will to be just all along the lines, hence his anxiety to advise Britain to follow him to secure success in the war. Mr. Gandhi's notion of justice is to follow what he advises, then alone it can be just. I am constrained to say I wish Mr. Gandhi will stop airing views which change from day to day and week to week and which consistently perpetuate inconsistencies and apply his mind to the only and one question, namely, settling the Hindu-Muslim question as he, of all the Congress leaders, is best fitted to represent the Hindus as such and he can deliver the goods on behalf of the Hindus and bring about complete adjustment between the two major communities and the rest will follow. I need hardly reiterate that I am willing to help to the utmost of my power on behalf of the Muslims towards an honourable solution.

"Apart from this academic discussion about a Constituent Assembly, it shows colossal ignorance, both historic and constitutional, to expect a foreign power that is dominating this country to sign its death warrant. The Constituent Assembly can only be real when it has got the sovereign authority of the people behind it, forged by the people, and who are in a position

to convene such a supreme national body, whose decisions and verdict could be respected and honoured and whose fiat and writs could be enforced. It is puerile to ask the British Government, in the first instance, to call a Constituent Assembly of another nation and afterwards have the honour and privilege of placing the Constitution framed by this supreme assembly of India on the Statute Book of the British Parliament."

In November His Excellency the Viceroy once again made an attempt to bring about unity between the Congress and the League and invited the Presidents of the two organisations together with Gandhi, and on the 2nd of November 1939 wrote to them the following letter: "You will remember that I agreed during our conversation yesterday to let you have in concrete form the proposition which I put to you and the other gentlemen who were present at the meeting, emphasising that I did so with a genuine desire to help, a desire fully shared by His Majesty's Government.

"The proposition which I invited you and the other gentlemen present to consider, as leaders of the Congress and the Muslim League, was that, given the great importance of ensuring harmonious working at the Centre, you should enter upon discussions between yourselves with a view to discovering

whether you could reach a basis of agreement between yourselves in the provincial field, consequent on which you could let me have proposals which would result in representatives of your two organisations immediately participating in the Central Government as members of my Executive Council.

"I brought out, too, that, in my judgment, it ought not to be necessary absolutely to resolve every detail of such differences as may exist in the provinces. What was required, as was remarked in the course of the discussion, was a degree of agreement in respect of the provinces, such as to make it possible for my visitors, and the organisations which they represented, to put forward a scheme which could be considered for the Centre.

"I added, in regard to any arrangement at the Centre :

> "Firstly, that one would hope that it might be found practicable to include also one or possibly more representatives of other important groups, and that was a question on which I should value your advice when we came to grapple with the details ;
>
> "Secondly, that the arrangement which I invited you to consider for the

Centre would be an *ad hoc* arrangement for the period of the war, and quite distinct from the much wider question of constitutional reform at the end of the war; and I mentioned that on that last point my declaration had set out the position of His Majesty's Government. I attach a copy of the extracts from that declaration which I brought to the notice of the meeting yesterday;

"Thirdly, that the position of anyone appointed to my Executive Council as a member of a political party would be identical, in privileges and in obligations, with that of the existing members of my Council; and

"Fourthly, that the arrangement would be within the general scheme of the existing law. It would be admittedly and inevitably a makeshift arrangement for the duration of the campaign. I brought out that what was required now, if we could get a workable scheme together it was to put into operation with as little delay as possible, pending the more general review of the whole constitutional position which His Majesty's Government have expressed

their readiness to undertake after the conclusion of hostilities.

"I think the above makes the position clear. Let me, in conclusion, repeat that, as I said yesterday, I am at any time at your disposal or that of the other gentlemen who attended our meeting, whether jointly or singly, to give any assistance in my power in reaching conclusions on these most important matters. I feel certain, as I said yesterday, that the suggestions I have put to you, reflecting as they do very real and substantial evidence of the anxiety of His Majesty's Government to reach a complete understanding, will receive full and sympathetic consideration from you."

The reply that was sent by Rajendra Prasad, the President of the Congress, stated at the outset that both he and Gandhi missed at the interview any reference to the "main and moral issue" raised by the Congress about clarification of war aims, without which it was impossible for the Congress to consider any subsidiary proposal. Rajendra Prasad insisted on the declaration suggested by the Congress Working Committee some time ago and resented "the communal question being dragged in, in this connection".

Mohammad Ali Jinnah, on the other hand, sent the following reply: "With

reference to the joint interview which Mr. Gandhi, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, President of the Congress, and myself had with you on November 1, and in reply to your letter dated November 2, I beg to inform you that I understood that the Congress leaders and myself were to consider the proposals of Your Excellency. In consequence I met the leaders of the Congress and I was informed by them finally that they had come to the conclusion that they could not discuss any questions with regard to matters referred to in your letter of the 2nd instant, relating to the provincial field or at the Centre, until the British Government had complied with their demand as embodied in the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee; hence these two questions were not further discussed."

This was the story of the official attempt at unity. Unofficially Jawaharlal failed to discover a 'common ground' between him and the League leader, and after an exchange of a few letters the matter was dropped.

CHAPTER XXIV

MUSLIM DEMAND

The All-India Muslim League was now entering on a different phase altogether. Mohammad Ali Jinnah had become the living symbol of Muslim unity and Muslim politics had so completely centred round him that he had become almost an institution in himself. Muslim opinion was being successfully and correctly voiced by him and Musalmans were satisfied with his leadership and people had learnt to repose confidence in the League. The fear of exploitation by others of the Muslim platform and Muslim sentiments had vanished. Those who were expecting to use the League for their own personal ends were also disillusioned and Muslim intelligentsia regained the hope of making the League into a really national organisation of the Musalmans, and instead of criticising it and giving it up as a bad job was offering constructive suggestions. The League had attracted the younger generation to its ideals and they were beginning to realise that further apathy towards their own organisation would involve the danger of letting it pass into unworthy hands for which they themselves would be responsible. They were, therefore, taking once more an active interest in the League and its work.

The annual session of the League opened at Lahore on the 22nd March 1940 amidst scenes of great enthusiasm. Thousands met in the huge *pandal* which was tastefully decorated. Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the President-elect arrived, in the afternoon and was conducted to the *pandal* in a procession. He was received by the huge gathering with a great ovation. Nawab Sir Shah Nawaz Khan of Mamdot welcomed the session in a speech and pointed out that the greatest achievement of the League during recent years was the suspension of the Federal part of the Government of India Act of 1935.

The Presidential Address delivered by Mohammad Ali Jinnah extempore gave a summary of the events and activities of the League during the last few months. Jinnah said: "We are meeting today in our session after fifteen months. The last session of the All-India Muslim League took place at Patna in December 1938. Since then many developments have taken place. I shall first shortly tell you what the All-India Muslim League had to face after the Patna session of 1938. You remember that one of the tasks, which was imposed on us and which is far from completed yet, was to organise Muslim Leagues all over India. We have made enormous progress during the last fifteen months in this direction. I am glad to inform you that we have established

Provincial Leagues in every province. The next point is that in every by-election to the Legislative Assemblies we had to fight with powerful opponents. I congratulate the Musalmans for having shown enormous grit and spirit throughout our trials. There was not a single by-election in which our opponents won against Muslim League candidates. In the last election to the U. P. Councils, that is the Upper Chamber, the Muslim League's success was cent per cent. I do not want to weary you with details of what we have been able to do in the way of forging ahead in the direction of organising the Muslim League. But I may tell you that it is going up by leaps and bounds.

"Next, you may remember that we appointed a committee of ladies at the Patna session. It is of very great importance to us, because I believe that it is absolutely essential for us to give every opportunity to our women to participate in our struggle of life and death. Women can do a great deal within their homes even under purdah. We appointed this committee with a view to enabling them to participate in the work of the League. The objects of this central committee were, firstly, to organise provincial and district Muslim Leagues; secondly, to enlist a larger number of women to the membership of the Muslim League; thirdly, to carry on an intensive propaganda amongst

Muslim women throughout India in order to create in them a sense of greater political consciousness—because if political consciousness is awakened among our women, remember, your children will not have much to worry about; and fourthly, to advise and guide them in all such matters as mainly rest on them for the uplift of Muslim society. This central committee, I am glad to say, started its work seriously and earnestly. It has done a great deal of useful work. I have no doubt that when we come to deal with their report of work done we shall really feel grateful to them for all the service that they have rendered to the Muslim League.

"We had many difficulties to face from January 1939 right up to the declaration of war. We had to face the Vidya Mandir in Nagpur. We had to face the Wardha Scheme all over India. We had to face ill-treatment and oppression to Muslims in the Congress-governed Provinces. We had to face the treatment meted out to Muslims in some of the Indian States such as Jaipur and Bhavnagar. We had to face a vital issue that arose in that little state of Rajkot. Rajkot was the acid test made by the Congress which would have affected one-third of India. Thus the Muslim League had all along to face various issues from January 1939 up to the time of the declaration of war. Before the war was declared the greatest danger to the Muslims of India was the possible

inauguration of the Federal scheme in the Central Government. We know what machinations were going on. But the Muslim League was stoutly resisting them in every direction. We felt that we could never accept the dangerous scheme of the Central Federal Government embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935. I am sure that we have made no small contribution towards persuading the British Government to abandon the scheme of Central Federal Government. In creating that mind in the British Government the Muslim League, I have no doubt, played no small part. You know that the British people are very obdurate people. They are also very conservative; and although they are very clever, they are slow in understanding. After the war was declared, the Viceroy naturally wanted help from the Muslim League. It was only then that he realised that the Muslim League was a power. For it will be remembered that up to the time of the declaration of war, the Viceroy never thought of me but of Gandhi and Gandhi alone. I have been the leader of an important party in the Legislature for a considerable time, larger than the one I have the honour to lead at present, the Muslim League Party in the Central Legislature. Yet the Viceroy never thought of me before. Therefore, when I got this invitation from the Viceroy along with Mr. Gandhi, I wondered within myself why I was so suddenly promoted and then I

concluded that the answer was the 'All-India Muslim League,' whose President I happen to be. I believe that was the worst shock that the Congress High Command received, because it challenged their sole authority to speak on behalf of India. And it is quite clear from the attitude of Mr. Gandhi and the High Command that they have not yet recovered from that shock. My point is that I want you to realise the value, the importance, the significance of organising ourselves. I will not say anything more on the subject."

Jinnah explained the position in which Musalmans found themselves and said they were between the devil and the deep sea. The Congress on the one hand and the British Government on the other were trying to put Muslims in an awkward position. The Congress rule during the past two and a half years had been most objectionable and the declaration of war had brought increased trouble and worry. But the Federal scheme was now abandoned and they had to think for the future. "Now," said he, "what is our position with regard to the future Constitution? It is that, as soon as circumstances permit or immediately after the war at the latest, the whole problem of India's future Constitution must be examined *de novo* and the Act of 1935 must go once for all. We do not believe in asking the British Government to make declarations. These declarations are

really of no use. You cannot possibly succeed in getting the British Government out of this country by asking them to make declarations. However, the Congress asked the Viceroy to make a declaration. The Viceroy said, 'I have made the declaration.' The Congress said, 'No, no; we want another kind of declaration. You must declare now and at once that India is free and independent with the right to frame its own constitution by a constituent assembly to be elected on the basis of adult franchise or as low a franchise as possible. This assembly will of course satisfy the minorities' legitimate interests.' Mr. Gandhi says that if the minorities are not satisfied then he is willing that some tribunal of the highest character and most impartial should decide the dispute. Now, apart from the impracticable character of this proposal and quite apart from the fact that it is historically and constitutionally absurd to ask the ruling power to abdicate in favour of a constituent assembly, apart from all that, suppose we do not agree as to the franchise according to which the Central Assembly is to be elected, or suppose we, the solid body of Muslim representatives, do not agree with the non-Muslim majority in the constituent assembly, what will happen? It is said that we have no right to disagree with regard to anything that this assembly may do in framing a national constitution of this huge sub-continent except those matters which may be germane to the

safeguards of the minorities. So we are given the privilege to disagree only with regard to what may be called strictly safeguards of the rights and interests of minorities We are also given the privilege to send our own representatives by separate electorates. Now, this proposal is based on the assumption that as soon as this contribution comes into operation the British hand will disappear. Otherwise there will be no meaning in it. Of course, Mr. Gandhi says that the constitution will decide whether the British will disappear and, if so, to what extent. In other words, his proposal comes to this. 'First give me the declaration that we are free and independent nation, then I will decide what I should give you back!' Does Mr. Gandhi really want the complete independence of India when he talks like this? But whether the British disappear or not, it follows that extensive powers must be transferred to the people. In the event of there being a disagreement between the majority of the Constituent Assembly and the Musalmans, in the first instance, who will appoint the tribunal? And suppose an agreed tribunal is possible and the award is made and the decision given, who will, may I know, be there to see that this award is implemented or carried out in accordance with the terms of that award? And who will see that it is honoured in practice, because, we are told, the British will have parted with their power completely? Then what will be the sanction

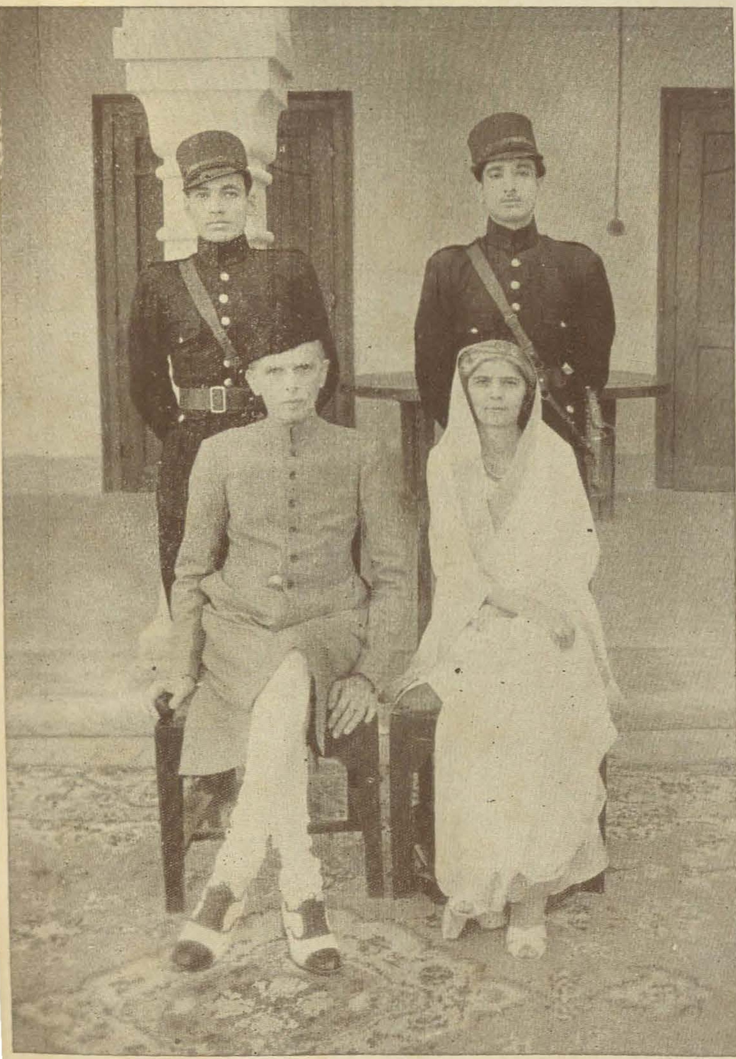
behind the award which will enforce it? We come back to the same answer: the Hindu majority would do it—and will it be with the help of the British bayonet or Mr. Gandhi's 'ahimsa'? Can we trust them any more? Besides, ladies and gentlemen, can you imagine that a question of this character, of social contract upon which the future constitution of India would be based affecting ninety million of Musalmans, can be decided by means of a judicial tribunal? Still that is the proposal of the Congress."

"As far as our internal position is concerned," he proceeded, "we have also been examining it and, you know, there are several schemes which have been sent by various well-informed constitutionalists and others who take interest in the problem of India's future constitution, and we have also appointed a sub-committee to examine the details of the schemes that have come in so far. But one thing is quite clear: it has always been taken for granted mistakenly that the Musalmans are a minority and, of course, we have got used to it for such a long time that these settled notions sometimes are very difficult to remove. The Musalmans are not a minority. The Musalmans are a nation by any definition."

"The problem in India," declared Mohammad Ali Jinnah, "is not of an inter-communal but manifestly of an international

character, and it must be treated as such. So long as this basic and fundamental truth is not realised, any constitution that may be built will result in disaster and will prove destructive and harmful not only to the Musalmans but to the British and Hindus also. If the British Government are really in earnest and sincere to secure peace and happiness of the people of this sub-continent, the only course open to us all is to allow the major nations separate homelands by dividing India into autonomous national states. There is no reason why these states should be antagonistic to each other. On the other hand the rivalry and the natural desire and efforts on the part of one to dominate the social order and establish political supremacy over the other in the government of the country will disappear. It will lead more towards natural good-will by international pacts between them, and they can live in complete harmony with their neighbours. This will lead further to a friendly settlement all the more easily with regard to minorities by reciprocal arrangements and adjustments between Muslim India and Hindu India, which will far more adequately and effectively safeguard the rights and interests of Muslims and various other minorities.

" It is extremely difficult to appreciate why our Hindu friends fail to understand the real natures of Islam and Hinduism. They are not religions in the strict sense of the



Mr. M. A. Jinnah with his Sister Miss F. Jinnah and their A.D.C.'S at Aligarh

word, but are, in fact, quite different and distinct social orders, and it is a dream that the Hindus and Muslims can ever evolve a common nationality, and this misconception of one Indian nation has gone far beyond the limits and is the cause of most of our troubles and will lead India to destruction if we fail to revise our notions in time. The Hindus and Muslims belong to two different religious philosophies, social customs, literature. They neither intermarry, nor interdine and, indeed, they belong to two different civilisations which are based mainly on conflicting ideas and conceptions. Their aspects on life and of life are different. It is quite clear that Hindus and Musalmans derive their inspiration from different sources of history. They have different epics, their heroes are different, and different episodes. Very often the hero of one is a foe of the other and, likewise, their victories and defeats overlap. To yoke together two such nations under a single state, one as a numerical minority and the other as a majority, must lead to growing discontent and final destruction of any fabric that may be so built up for the government of such a state."

On the next day the open session of the All-India Muslim League passed the following resolution :

" (1) While approving and endorsing the

action taken by the Council and the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League, as indicated in their resolutions dated the 27th of August, 17th and 18th of September and 22nd of October 1939, and 3rd of February 1940 on the constitutional issue, this session of the All-India Muslim League emphatically reiterates that the scheme of Federation embodied in the Government of India Act, 1935, is totally unsuited to, and unworkable in, the peculiar conditions of this country and is altogether unacceptable to Muslim India.

"(2) It further records its emphatic view that while the declaration dated the 18th of October 1939 made by the Viceroy on behalf of His Majesty's Government is reassuring in so far as it declares that the policy and plan on which the Government of India Act, 1935, is based will be reconsidered in consultation with the various parties, interests and communities in India, Muslim India will not be satisfied unless the whole constitutional plan is reconsidered *de novo* and that no revised plan would be acceptable to the Muslims unless it is framed with their approval and consent.

"(3) Resolved that it is the considered view of this session of the All-India Muslim League that no constitutional plan would be workable in this country or acceptable to

Muslims unless it is designed on the following basic principle, namely, that geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted, with such territorial readjustments as may be necessary, that the areas in which the Muslims are numerically in a majority as in the North-Western and Eastern Zones of India should be grouped to constitute 'Independent States' in which the constituent units shall be autonomous and sovereign.

"That adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards should be specifically provided in the constitution for minorities in these units and in these regions for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them; and in other parts of India where the Musalmans are in a minority adequate, effective and mandatory safeguards shall be specially provided in the constitution for them and other minorities for the protection of their religious, cultural, economic, political, administrative and other rights and interests in consultation with them.

"This session further authorises the Working Committee to frame a scheme of constitution in accordance with these basic principles, providing for the assumption finally by the respective regions of all powers such as

defence, external affairs, communications, customs and such other matters as may be necessary."

One of the most outstanding features of the Lahore League was the masterly handling by Mohammad Ali Jinnah of the unfortunate situation that developed due to a clash between the Khaksars and the Punjab Government, which had resulted in the loss of life of some Khaksars. The incident had incited the feelings of Punjab Muslims and had driven them to frenzy. The position of Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, the Punjab Premier, had become rather awkward. Muslim opinion from which he drew most of his support had been excited against him and he was even exposed to personal danger. The opponents of the League had not failed to use this incident to incite public opinion against the leadership of Mohammad Ali Jinnah, for he, according to them, was unmindful of what was happening to Musalmans. Khaksars and their sympathisers threatened him with all sorts of things. They insisted that the League must take the matter up and deal with Sir Sikandar in a befitting manner. The lieutenants of Jinnah suggested that he should interview some of the Khaksar leaders. The conduct of the regular business of the League was more and more being exploited by the League opponents, and Khaksars were made to believe

that Jinnah would leave Lahore after having successfully evaded the issue. Khaksars were threatening the peaceful atmosphere of the League Session and the personal safety of Mohammad Ali Jinnah was equally a matter of anxiety. In the midst of all this excitement and uncertainty, Jinnah announced that he would address an open meeting of Khaksars and the Muslim public at large. Hundreds of thousands of people gathered to listen to him and every thoughtful Muslim believed that Jinnah had taken an impolitic step, looking to the highly pent-up public feelings. The huge gathering showed every sign of a probable riot. But Jinnah, a well-groomed, well-dressed, tall and slim, with experience and courage written on his face came and ascended the pedestal from which he was going to speak to the crowd. Calm in his demeanour, he cracked a few jokes with those sitting around him and in the midst of imminent rowdyism, gracefully lighted a cigarette with complete equanimity. In a few minutes the eyes of every one present were riveted on him and an atmosphere of strange expectancy prevailed upon the great mass of the people. Loud shouts demanding justice filled the air.

After some moments, Mohammad Ali Jinnah stood up and raised his hand bidding his audience to remain calm, and pin-drop silence ensued. This was the time when Jinnah, perhaps, gauged his strength for

the first time. This was the time when he realised how much devotion he had earned from his followers by sheer service. This was the time when he felt how much confidence Musalmans of India had already reposed in him. The demonstration was enough to hearten any man. Armed with self-reliance and the weight of his own judgment, with righteousness and justice of his cause, with power and courage of convictions and with a determination to give the right lead to his followers he spoke, though not without being quite excited himself, a few words assuring every one that he had the cause of his people at heart, and that he would do everything in his power to see that justice is meted out to Khaksars. The League was assembling at Lahore and there was no cause for anxiety. The meeting terminated in a peaceful atmosphere and Jinnah enlisted support of thousands of more Musalmans.

As a result of this the League passed the following resolution: " This session of the All-India Muslim League places on record its deep sense of sorrow for the unfortunate and tragic occurrence on March 19, 1940, owing to a clash between the Khaksars and the police resulting in the loss of a large number of lives and injuries to many more, and sincerely sympathises with those who have suffered and with their families and

dependents.

"This session calls upon the Government to appoint forthwith an independent and impartial committee of inquiry, the personnel of which would command perfect confidence of the people with instructions to them to make full and complete investigation and inquiry in the whole affair and make their report as soon as possible.

"This session authorises the Working Committee to take such action in the matter as they may consider proper immediately after the publication for the report of the committee.

"This session urges upon the various Governments that the order declaring the Khaksar organisation unlawful should be removed as soon as possible."

The resolution was moved from the chair. Jinnah assured the Musalmans that, whether it be the Punjab Government, the Government of India, the Punjab Ministry or the Punjab Premier, the League would not rest until the Khaksars got justice. Jinnah requested every Musalman in the Punjab and particularly the Khaksars in the Punjab and elsewhere in India to put their heads together and see that when time of inquiry came they placed their material before

the investigating authority. Jinnah said: "The resolution is the result of discussion in the Subjects Committee last night from 9 p.m. to 2 o'clock in the morning. The Subjects Committee adopted this resolution in the form in which it is now placed before you. They have passed it unanimously and now it is for you to deal with it. The resolution represents their considered opinion and they want me to convey to you that this resolution should be put from the chair. There are many reasons for this course to be adopted. The first reason is that it will not be desirable to have people coming and making speech after speech. It is very difficult to restrain passions and some may say something which might be considered harmful to our interests. Another reason is that the matter is *sub judice*. It asks for a full and complete investigation and inquiry and it will not be in the fitness of things that on the one hand we ask for an inquiry and on the other we pronounce our judgment." Jinnah reminded the audience that there was a clause in the resolution which authorised the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League to take such action as they thought proper immediately after the publication of the report of the Enquiry Committee.

At the close of the League session the Muslim leader again referred to the Khaksar

tragedy and said he was very much perturbed when he learnt about the firing on the Khaksars. He was advised not to hold the session of the League but as he had the fullest faith in his people he decided not to postpone the session. When he reached Lahore he told press representatives in an interview that the Lahore session of the Muslim League was going to be a landmark in the future history of the Musalmans of India. He had no doubt that barring this tragedy on the eve of the session, it had proved a great success. Had there not been this tragedy, there would have been a magnificent procession and they would have had the opportunity of demonstrating their enthusiasm. Their enemies wanted to mar the session, semehow or other, but all their attempts had failed and the session had concluded successfully. Jinnah was happy that deliberations of the session were conducted in a calm and quiet atmosphere. It was the acid test for the Muslims, when their blood was boiling, and when no less than thirty Muslims were shot dead, it was very difficult to keep calm. "But you have demonstrated to the world that the Musalmans are capable of bearing sorrows. You have also shown to the world that you can conduct your business in a gathering of lakhs. It is the finest certificate that can be given to any nation. The prestige of the League was in the hands of the Musalmans of the Punjab. I, there-

fore, congratulate the Punjab Muslims from the bottom of my heart. It gives me courage to serve you all. "

The Lahore League was indeed a landmark in the history of India and of the Musalmans. Before this, Muslim India had no goal in view and Muslim politics remained in the hands of the individuals of conflicting interests and inclinations. Very often the collective good of the nation suffered either at their hands or at the hands of their agents and wire-pullers. Iqbal and his followers had tried to place before the Muslims their rightful goal but they could not do it effectively. It required a Jinnah to fulfil the aspirations of a nation and that too at the most psychological moment. Muslims of India were now organised and learnt to know that their organisation was more important than those individuals who had hitherto conducted the affairs of the Musalmans. The British Government had declared that the policy underlying the Government of India Act of 1935 was to be revised. The Federal Scheme of this Act had already been suspended and in any future constitution, the views of Muslim India were to be taken into consideration. It was therefore in the fitness of things that Musalmans expressed their views regarding the kind of the constitution they would like to have and the result was the Lahore Resolution. It was in fact the spirit of Iqbal

that showed itself through Mohammad Ali Jinnah. The Muslim Poet had recognised in Jinnah as the only leader who could accomplish the stupendous task of bringing the scattered forces of Muslim India to a common field for unified action. Jinnah knew it and was waiting for the opportunity to hit the mark at Lahore. "Iqbal is no more amongst us," said Jinnah to the author once, "but had he been alive he would have been happy to know that we did exactly what he wanted us to do."

The Lahore Resolution of the League was followed by an immediate and intensified campaign of misrepresentation of the League demand. Every scrap of Hindu opinion rose in opposition, and some of the Hindu leaders even went the length of using indignified words against the League President. Judgments were passed the day after the publication of the League Resolution. Facts and figures were quoted in utter contradiction of truth. Contorted narrations of incidents of history were made. Examples with no meaning were cited. Dissimilar analogies were employed. Frothy sentiments were surging up. Musalmans were warned against their own decision and their own leadership. Overnight the Hindu leadership became the champions of Musalmans. Overnight they began to think in terms of a world order. Some said that the League wanted the

Muslim minorities in Hindu areas to migrate to Muslim areas. Others opined that Sikhs would never agree to this proposal. A few were of the opinion that the Muslim proposition would not suit the Indian States and therefore it was useless to pursue the matter. Wardha spoke in the same strain, and hoped that Great Britain would not allow it to materialise.

Undeterred by this volley of attacks Jinnah hoped "that at any rate the better mind of the Hindus will give earnest and serious consideration to our proposals as therein lies the achievement of India's freedom at the earliest possible period. This freedom we shall be able to retain peacefully both internally and externally."

To Jinnah it was amazing that "men like Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Rajagopalacharia should talk about the Lahore resolution in such terms as 'vivisection of India' and 'cutting the baby into two halves.' Surely, today India is divided and partitioned by Nature. Muslim India and Hindu India exist on the physical map of India, I fail to see why there is this hue and cry. Where is the country which is being divided? Where is the nation which is denationalised? India is composed of nationalities, to say nothing about the castes and sub-castes. Where is the central national Government whose authority is being violated? India

is held by the British power and that is the hand that holds and gives the impression of a United India and a unitary Government. Indian nation and central government do not exist. It is only the convenient imagination of the Congress High Command. It is a pure intellectual and mental luxury, in which some of the Hindu leaders have been indulging so recklessly."

"The issues involve," said Mohammad Ali Jinnah, "the future fate and destiny of ninety million of Musalmans and I am sure that Muslim India today is fully alive to the gravity of the situation both internal and external that is facing us. Our ideal and our fight is not to harm or injure any other community or interest or block the progress but to defend ourselves. We want to live in this country an honourable life as free men, and we stand for free Islam and free India."

Hindudom gave the Lahore Resolution of the League the name of Pakistan and it was gratefully accepted by the Musalmans.

CHAPTER XXV

THE DEADLOCK

His Excellency the Viceroy's proposals at Delhi in November 1939, that the Congress and the Muslim League should enter upon discussion between themselves with a view to discovering whether they could reach a basis of agreement in the provincial field which would be followed up by the representatives of the two organisations immediately participating in the Central Government as members of the Executive Council, were summarily rejected by the Congress. But the Viceroy had resolved to continue his efforts to enlist India's support for the successful prosecution of the war. Negotiations between the Viceroy and Mohammad Ali Jinnah were proceeding apace through correspondence and personal interviews. On the first of July 1940, Jinnah while in Simla, at the invitation of His Excellency the Viceroy, forwarded the following suggestions marked as "Tentative Proposals":

"That no pronouncement or statement should be made by His Majesty's Government which would in any way militate against the basic and fundamental principles laid down by the Lahore Resolution of division of India

and creating Muslim States in the north-west and eastern zones; and it may be stated that that ideal now has become the universal faith of Muslim India.

"That His Majesty's Government must give a definite and categorical assurance to the Musalmans of India that no interim or final scheme of constitution would be adopted by the British Government without the previous approval of Muslim India. In view of the rapid developments in Europe and the grave danger that is facing India it is fully realised that everything should be done that is possible to intensify war efforts and mobilise all the resources of India for her defence, for the purpose of maintaining internal security, peace and tranquillity, and to ward off external aggression. But this can only be achieved provided the British Government are ready and willing to associate the Muslim leadership as equal partners in the Government both at the Centre and in all the Provinces. In other words, Muslim India leadership must be fully trusted as equals and have equal share in the authority and control of the Governments, Central and Provincial.

"Provisionally and during the period of the war, the following steps should be taken to comply with the formula, namely, co-operation with the Government with equal share in the authority of the Government:

"(a) That the Executive Council of the Viceroy should be enlarged, within the framework of the present constitutional existing law, the additional number to be settled after further discussion but it being understood that the Muslim representation must be equal to that of the Hindus if the Congress comes in; otherwise they should have the majority of the additional members as it is obvious that the main burden and the responsibility will be borne by the Musalmans in that case.

"(b) That in the provinces where Section 93 of the Act has to operate, Non-official Advisers should be appointed, the number to be fixed after further discussion, and the majority of the Non-official Advisers should be the representatives of Musalmans; and where the provinces can be run by a combination of parties or 'coalition,' naturally it would be for the parties concerned to adjust matters by agreement among themselves.

"(c) That there should be a War Council consisting of not less than fifteen members, including the President, to be presided over by His Excellency the Viceroy. I do not like the expression 'War Consultative Committee'. This Council should regularly meet to deal with, and review the general situation as it may develop from

time to time, and advise the Government with regard to matters in connection with the prosecution of the war generally, and in particular, the fullest development of defence possible and of finance and to make a thorough economic and industrial drive. On this body it will not be difficult to secure the representation and full co-operation of the Indian Princes, and as far as I can judge they would have no difficulty in joining it. It is through this body that the association of the Princes can be secured. Here again the representation of the Muslim India must be equal to that of the Hindus if the Congress comes in, otherwise they should have the majority.

"Finally, the representatives of the Musalmans on the proposed War Council and the Executive Council of the Governor-General and the additional Non-official Advisers of the Governors, should be chosen by the Muslim League."

The Viceroy wrote back to Jinnah on the 6th of July as follows:

"I am much obliged for the private and personal memorandum headed 'Tentative Proposals' which you were kind enough to send me in your letter to my Private Secretary on July 1. I note the points taken in Paragraph 1 of that memorandum, and in the

first sentence of Paragraph 2, both of which you emphasised in our recent conversation. I welcome also the amplification, as putting me in fuller possession of your mind, of that conversation represented by the balance of your letter. But certain of the points taken suggest there may be some slight misapprehension, which you will, I think, agree that it would be desirable that I should clear without delay.

" As regards my expansion of the Executive Council, this would, as you rightly observe in your memorandum, be within the existing constitutional scheme. In other words, any council so expanded would co-operate as a whole and as a single Government of India. It is not a case of striking a balance between the different interests or of preserving the proportions between the important parties. As you yourself indicated in the course of our conversation, there are parties other than either Congress or the Muslim League who may fairly claim to be considered for inclusion, and there is a very definite limit of numbers to any possible expansion. At the same time I readily accept the importance, in the event of any expansion, of securing adequate representation of Muslim interests and that is a point which I would bear in mind.

" There is, however, as you will see from

my explanation, no question of responsibility falling in greater or less degree on any particular section. Responsibility will be that of the Governor-General-in-Council as a whole. Again, it will be clear that under existing law and practice it must remain with the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Governor-General, to decide upon such names as we may submit to His Majesty the King for inclusion in the Governor-General's Executive Council, and such persons cannot be the nominees of political parties, however important; though it may, of course, be assumed that both the Secretary of State and the Governor-General would, in all cases, do their utmost to select persons from the various sections of the community.

"I need not remind you that under law the whole responsibility for Government in Section 93 provinces vests exclusively in the Governor, although a Governor can, of course, take advantage of the assistance of any advisers he may appoint. Whether, and if so at what point, and in what strength, Non-official Advisers from political parties should be appointed in provinces under Section 93 administration, in the event of an expansion of the Governor-General's Council, would clearly call for consideration in the light of circumstances of each province. You will, I think, agree with me also that the importance of the community from which Advisers are

drawn in a particular province has a direct bearing.

" Your idea for a War Council is, in my view, well worth-while considering, though details would have to be worked out. Here again there are, of course, many parties to be considered other than the Muslim League or the Congress.

"As regards Section III of your memorandum, I ought, I think, to make it clear that it would be constitutionally impossible for the choice of Muslim gentlemen to be appointed to any expanded Executive Council or as Non-official Advisers to rest with the Muslim League. But in the contingency envisaged you need not fear that any suggestions you may put forward would not receive full consideration.

" Let me, in conclusion, thank you again for your very clear and valuable memorandum. I realise, of course, fully that it is not merely private and personal, but that, in your own words, it embodies a tentative proposal. I am sure that you will agree with me that it is well that there should be no misunderstanding on the important points on which I have touched above."

The reader is familiar with the fact how Mohammad Ali Jinnah's famous letter written

to the Prime Minister of Great Britain regarding condition of business in the Round Table Conference served as a helpful suggestion to His Majesty's Government. The reader will no doubt be interested to know how in 1940 after a decade the phenomenon was repeated. The " Tentative Proposal " presented by the Muslim leader found an echo in the Viceroy's announcement of August 8, 1940. Jinnah was, therefore, to a great extent, satisfied with the Viceroy's announcement and set himself to work out the details in consultation with His Excellency. But the Viceroy could not supply any details as to the number of representatives, the creation of portfolios, and parties that were likely to come in the Executive Council; he only informed the Muslim leader that two seats could be given to the League. The negotiations therefore fell with a thud.

The August pronouncement and its amplification by the Secretary of State for India contained certain departures from the conventional attitude of His Majesty's Government towards India's constitutional advance. "His Majesty's Government's concern," said the Viceroy, "that full weight should be given to the views of the minorities in any revision, has also been brought out. That remains the position of His Majesty's Government. It goes without saying that they could not contemplate the transfer of their present responsibilities, for the peace and welfare of India, to

any system of Government whose authority is directly denied by large and powerful elements in India's national life." Dealing with this aspect of the problem and the political importance of the Indian Congress, Mr. Amery said : " The Congress leaders are men inspired by an ardent national patriotism. They have built up a remarkable organisation, by far the most efficient political machine in India, of which they are justly proud. They have striven to make that organisation national and all-embracing. If only they had succeeded, if the Congress could, in fact, speak as it professes to speak for all main elements in India's national life then, however advanced their demands, our problem would have been in many respects far easier than it is today. It is true that they are numerically the largest single party in British India. But their claim in virtue of that fact, to speak for India is utterly denied by very important elements in India's complex national life. These other elements assert their right to be regarded not as mere numerical minorities but as separate constituent factors in any future Indian policy, entitled to be treated as such, in any discussions for the shaping of India's future constitution.

" The foremost among these elements stands the great Muslim community, of ninety million strong and constituting a majority both in North-Western and North-Eastern

India, but scattered as a minority over the whole sub-continent. In religious and social outlook, in historic tradition and culture, the difference between them and their Hindu fellow-countrymen goes as deep as, if not deeper than, any similar difference in Europe. That need not and does not prevent pleasant social intercourse of fruitful political co-operation. It has not, in fact, prevented individual Muslims taking an active part in the work of the Congress Party. But, as a body, the Muslims have stood aloof. Their quarrel with the scheme of the existing Act is not that it fails to give that clear majority rule which the Congress asks for, but that it would give too great powers to a Hindu majority at the Centre. They will have nothing to do with a constitution framed by a constituent assembly elected by a majority vote in geographical constituencies. They claim the right in any constitutional discussions to be regarded as an entity and are determined only to accept a constitution whose actual structure will secure their position as an entity against the operations of a mere numerical majority."

Talking about Indian unity, Mr. Amery remarked: "India cannot be unitary in the sense that we are in this island, but she can still be a unity. India's future house of freedom has room for many mansions." Emphasising the need of agreement between the

main political groups in India, Mr. Amery declared, " Agreement, consent, is indeed the foundation of all free government, of all true democracy. Decision by majority is not so much of the essence of democracy. Decision by majority is not so much of the essence of democracy as a practical convenience, which presupposes for its proper working an antecedent general consent to the constitution itself. It has, indeed, in most federal constitutions been limited in various ways in order to safeguard the separate interests of the federating elements. To describe the need for such agreement as a veto on constitutional progress is, I think, to do an injustice to the patriotism and sense of responsibility of those concerned. Agreement means not veto by any elements but compromise, and willingness to compromise in India, as elsewhere, is an essential test of the sense of responsibility on which free government must be based."

This was in fact an indication that Musalmans had made themselves felt by His Majesty's Government, and that the growing strength and influence of Jinnah were slowly being realised. This was a bitter pill for the Congress to swallow and a peep into the current events of India's political history show that the Congress engaged itself in a desperate struggle for winning power and supremacy over the League. There were two

courses open. The first was to give a vigorous opposition to the British Government and to threaten them with obstructing the war effort. The second was to contact League leaders in the various provinces and decoy Jinnah's lieutenants into co-operation with the Congress. The first course was adopted soon after the August pronouncement and the Congress Working Committee called upon "all Congress organisations to carry on their activities with full vigour and, in particular, to explain the Congress position and recent developments to the public. Satyagraha Committees must see that those who have taken the pledge act in terms of this pledge and carry on the constructive and other activities of the Congress." In these words the programme of individual civil disobedience was strengthened under the garb of national assertion, and on the pretext that it was conducted for the purpose of obtaining freedom of speech to carry on anti-war propaganda, because the Congress being a non-violent organisation was opposed to war.

The inspiration for the second course came from the British Government itself, who had followed a similar policy in connection with the establishment of the War Committees. A prominent Congressman had suggested: "Should the international situation worsen appreciably, Britain will make a strong bid for Congress good-will by trying

to meet its demands, very much more than half-way. On his present showing, Jinnah will not be overpleased with this development and would in all probability resort to obstruction. Britain will then turn to her faithful friend Sikandar Hayat Khan. Perhaps the good offices and the powerful support of the Agha Khan would also be available. Nor would Fazlul Haq, the Bengal Premier, be found unwilling. Jinnah would still be left a good enough following, but then will come to him the tragic realisation, how so many of the Khan Bahadurs and Knights and titled gentry, who are now dancing attendance on him, will drop away in an instant, at a sign from the British Government whose creatures they are. Jinnah would still be a notable factor, but only a factor, not the sole determinant. A Gandhi-Agha Khan-Sikandar-Fazlul Haq understanding would have a more far-reaching effect than the Lucknow Pact of 1916. Jinnah would either have to toe the line or stand in haughty aloofness, unable to change the course of history." Consequently the Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, unknowingly, played into the hands of his Hindu colleagues and approached the Muslim Premiers of the Muslim Provinces. This attitude, therefore, was naturally resented by the Muslim leader, and he warned both the Congress and the British Government against making such an attempt.

At the first opportunity, therefore, in November he lodged his protest. "I am unable to accept that the Hindus and the Congress are fighting for the independence or freedom of the people of the country," said he. "We know why they have launched the civil disobedience movement. The British Government know why. It is to coerce the British Government to recognise the Congress as the only authoritative and representative organisation of the people of India. The Congress says: 'Come to a settlement with us. We are your friends; we desire to maintain your supremacy in this country. Come to terms with us and ignore the Musalmans and other minorities.' Mr. Bhulabhai Desai after he had an interview with Mr. Gandhi is reported to have appealed to Musalmans and other non-Congressmen not to put any obstacles in their way. He said in effect: 'Let the Congress fight this out in its own way.' May I ask the Congress High Command of which Mr. Desai is a member—he is also the Leader of the Congress Party in the Assembly—to tell us what are the war aims of the Congress against the British Government? We feel that the war aims of the Congress are to put all the pressure that they can on the British Government and coerce them, so that they may coerce us and let us down and throw us to the wolves. That is the war aim of the Congress. I ask them, why follow this ostrich policy? How

we possibly be deceived? The whole effort of the Congress seems to me to be like that of a bat which has entered a room and flies round and round knocking against the walls but will not, cannot, see that the door is wide open. What would the Musalmans do?" Jinnah declared: "It is, therefore, not possible for us to view this movement with equanimity. We must view it with serious anxiety. I say to Musalmans, please do not get mixed up or involved in this terrible situation, for which the Congress alone is responsible. But if we find at any time that our interests are at stake we cannot remain as onlookers and spectators but we shall play our part and intervene if necessary. Let that be understood."

In the same month speaking on the floor of the Legislative Assembly Jinnah emphatically declared: "And although I am pressed for time, I think I must tell the House the correct position. And I tell you and my Congress friends that they have still at the back of their mind the idea that the Congress and Congress alone represents the country, the people of India, the Indian nation, and so on; that they alone are the spokesmen, and that the Muslims and others are minorities. I say this on the floor of this House that the reason why there has not been a settlement between the Hindus and Musalmans is that the Congress is a Hindu

organisation, whatever they may say—that the Hindu leaders and Congress leaders have had always at the back of their minds the basis that the Musalmans have to come within the ken of the Congress and the Hindu raj, that they are a minority, and all that they can justly press for is merely safeguards as a minority, whereas let me tell gentlemen of the Congress and the Nationalist Congress Party members that the Musalmans always had at their back the basis—and it has never been different during the last twenty-five years—that they are a separate entity."

Developing his argument and analysing Congress politics Jinnah remarked: "But then comes the statement of 8th of August and Mr. Amery's speech. That is now the crux. I do not say that the British Government could have done anything else. If they had done anything else, if they had been a party to throw the Muslims and other minorities at the mercy of the Congress, they would have left a dishonourable record in the history of this country. If they had done that, what would it have come to? That is really where I am fundamentally at variance with the Congress. They do not want the independence of India. I will read what Mr. Gandhi said. What they want is, under the overlordship of Britain, power and patronage to dominate the Muslims and rest of the minorities. This is what Mr. Gandhi

himself says, and it is a thing to which I cannot subscribe. It is my conviction and I am satisfied that that is his objective and aim.

"The article he wrote on the 29th of October is a proof positive thereof. Of course, Mr. Gandhi's articles and speeches are such that you can derive support for any proposition; he is like the oracle of Delphi—but in order to understand Mr. Gandhi you have to study and go deep into the thing. This is what Mr. Gandhi said on the 29th of October last year after he had rejected the offer of the Viceroy: 'If to-day the British leave India, the Punjabis from the Punjab'—he might have honestly said Muslims—'and Gurkhas from the East will destroy the country. If, therefore, there could be anyone desirous of maintaining the supremacy of the British in India'—mark the words—'if, therefore, there could be anyone desirous of maintaining the supremacy of the British in India, it can only be the Congress.'

"Now comes the other operative part. 'It is the only authoritative and representative body of Indian people and of those Hindus who are, in spite of their majority, weak.'*

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*This quotation is not verbatim and is somewhat different from the original text of Gandhi's article. The mistake crept in because the correspondent who sent this quotation to Jinnah had perhaps obtained an Urdu version of

"I ask this house, I ask any intelligent man, what does this mean? On the 29th October last year, after the resolution of the All-India Congress Committee of the 10th October, within less than 20 days, Mr. Gandhi writes this article. That resolution, if you honestly believe in it, asks for complete independence: the right of the people of India to frame their own constitution by a constituent assembly to be elected by adult franchise. But here what does this mean? He was telling the British Government, 'You

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the article and therefore its rendering into English was bound to be different from the typical phraseology often employed by Gandhi. The correct version of the article in question, which Gandhi wrote in the *Harijan* on the 21st of October, 1939 under the caption of "The Fiction of Majority," is as follows:

"Consider for one moment, what can happen if the English were to withdraw all of a sudden and there was no foreign usurper to rule. It may be said that the Punjabis, be they Muslims, Sikhs or others, will overrun India. It is highly likely that the Gurkhas will throw in their lot with the Punjabis. Assume further that non-Punjabi Muslims will make common cause with the Punjabis. Where will the Congressmen, composed chiefly of Hindus, be? If they are still truly non-violent, they will be left unmolested by the warriors. Congressmen won't want to divide power with the warriors, but will refuse to let them exploit their unarmed countrymen. Thus, if anybody has cause to keep the British rule for protection from the stronger element, it is the Congressmen and those Hindus and others who are represented by the Congress. The question, therefore, resolves itself into not who is numerically superior, but who is stronger. Surely, there is only one answer. Those who raise the cry of minority in danger have nothing to fear from the so called majority which is merely a paper-majority and which, in any event, is ineffective because it is weak in the military sense."

settle with me, I am more desirous to maintain your supremacy here than the Punjabis and the Gurkhas.' Mr. Gandhi became a convert, a complete convert, to this artistic resolution of the 10th October when he found that this was not going to do the trick, and when he realised it, he became a convert and he found that it was a panacea for all and every kind of ills the people of India are suffering from. What was the panacea? The constituent Assembly. This went on. When this constituent Assembly was beaten and dead, then we come to what the Leader of Opposition emphasised to-day most—I believe the Congress Delhi resolution. What is it? He only mentioned a part of it. He did not emphasise the first part of it. The first part of it—correct me if I am wrong—declares "complete independence of India and freedom with a right to frame its own constitution by a constituent Assembly,' etc., etc. And mind you, it is a conjunctive *and* not *or* 'provisional national government at the Centre responsible to the elected members of this House'."

After this, Jinnah's statements were either in the shape of appeals to the Congress leadership for better sense and wisdom, or consisted of protests against their policy of civil disobedience which went unheeded; and his visit to Karachi at the end of the year 1940 confirmed his views that the "one aim of the

Congress in this province seems particularly to create disruption and disunity between Muslims, although a large body of Hindus disapprove of it and in fact are opposed to such manœuvres. This is most unfortunate and, what is more, it is perfectly futile and will not succeed. There is not the slightest doubt that Muslims are solidly behind the Muslim League in this province and Hindus of this province will not encourage or support these machinations of the Congress. I sincerely hope that thoughtful and better mind of Hindus will work together with Muslims peacefully and for a real advance and betterment of the people of this province. I am confident and it is obvious that nothing on earth will prevent the Muslim League being organised, and why should not the Muslim League organise itself? There is a Congress party in the Assembly, and outside there is a Hindu party. What is wrong in the Muslims organising themselves and establishing a party in the Legislature and augmenting and strengthening the Muslim League outside the Legislature? I sincerely hope that in the paramount interests of this province better counsels will prevail."

Jinnah had now become the ideal of the Muslim students and a hero of Muslim masses and all the time he was pulled by the two and pressed by invitations from different parts of India. In March 1941 he was taken

by the Punjab Muslim Students' Federation to Lahore, who had organised a Special Pakistan Session and soon after had to go to Aligarh to address the Muslim University Union. In April the Musalmans of Cawnpore were impatient to hear him and he had to accede to their request. At Cawnpore his programme of engagements was so crowded that he had hardly any time for rest. No less than thirty-two addresses were presented to him in one day, and, as he told the author, he had never before seen so many people as gathered there to hear him. These busy days told upon his health and when he reached Bombay he had a touch of fever.

The annual session of the All-India Muslim League was being held at Madras in April and Jinnah had to attend it. Notwithstanding his indifferent health, therefore, he started for Madras. The heat of South India and the inconvenience that a war-time journey generally causes further aggravated the effects of the strain from which he was already suffering. On the way he fainted in the railway compartment. Immediate medical aid was, however, provided by the Railway authorities and he was advised that he should not undergo further strain. At Madras, therefore, he left the special train kept ready for his reception. The state drive and procession prepared by the people of Madras in his honour, were led by other leaders in his stead. The Madras

League and subsequent events in the Madras Presidency showed to what length the message of Jinnah and his influence had already spread. People had come to Madras from hundreds of miles and many had even walked distances of scores of miles just to have a glimpse of their leader. And when they were told that he was not well enough to see them, they bowed down before the Almighty to pray for his health.

In the midst of popular demonstrations, Jinnah opened his presidential address orally in English, and kept them in a state of rapt attention for nearly two hours. In this speech Jinnah rose to the heights of his oratorical powers. His address will go down as one of his most masterly and magnificent utterances. In this speech Jinnah took in his sweep the entire gamut of the Indian political situation with pertinent references to the world situation. He elucidated beyond all shadow of doubt the goal, the ideology, and the policy of the Muslim League, surveyed the five-year progress of the League and its attitude towards the war situation, foreshadowed the next five-year plan, and made pointed criticism about the policy of the British Government, and also the policy and manoeuvres of the Congress, the Mahasabha and the latest offshoot of the Congress, the Sapru Conference. The speech illustrates another quality of Jinnah —a feature all too rare in Indian leadership—

namely, he means what he says and he says what he means. It is singularly free from sloppy sentimentality, vague verbosity and pontifical sermonising. He speaks as one who knows both the strength and the shortcomings of his followers; his speech is a correct measure of the tempo, the tendency, the aspiration and the determination of the Muslim nation. No wonder the audience at Madras, numbering 100,000 strong, were electrified by his soul-moving yet eminently sensible speech.*

During the intervening period Indian political activity had progressed fast. The Congress attitude towards war had softened and then became stiff again. A No-Party Leaders' Conference had been set up at Bombay under the leadership of Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru in order to cultivate the British Government on behalf of the Congress under the pretext of finding a suitable solution of the political deadlock. Rajagopalacharia, a prominent member of the Congress from Madras, had flung a "sporting offer" to Mr. Amery, the Secretary of State for India, that Hindus would not mind Mohammad Ali Jinnah becoming the Prime Minister of India, provided he was made responsible to the legislature in a "national government." Dealing with all

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* Jamiluddin Ahmad: *Recent Speeches and Writings of Mr. Jinnah.*

these machinations of the Congress, Jinnah asked: "What are the demands of the Congress?" And he went on answering the poser by stating that the demand was "the declaration of immediate and unconditional independence and freedom of India with power to the people of India, by a constituent Assembly, to be elected by adult franchise to frame their own constitution—of course, to the satisfaction of the minorities. How that will be brought about, heaven alone knows. I do not know." This was the demand of the Congress and when they found it was not going to wash—the British Government ought to be grateful to the Muslim League for saving them the maximum amount of trouble the Congress was determined to give them, and he believed that in their heart of hearts the British people were grateful to the Muslim League—they thought of a flanking movement. The Congress found that the British Government would not possibly accept the demand. For the Muslims it meant complete destruction if that demand was conceded without a Hindu-Muslim settlement. Therefore, naturally, the Muslim League opposed it tooth and nail. There were minorities also who were concerned with their own status, like the Scheduled Classes, the Christians and so on. The result was that Gandhi and the Congress found to their unexpected astonishment a strong opposition to the Congress demand. So the Congress

thought that if they could not get what they wanted by a frontal attack, they should try a flanking movement.

What was the flanking movement? Jinnah asked. He replied by saying, "another resolution." Jinnah here explained that as soon as the Congress passed a resolution, there would be commentators and interpreters. The explanation of the meaning of a resolution would go on for weeks and weeks and by the time the commentators had finished, yards and yards of statements would have been issued. They went from Delhi to Wardha, from Wardha to Delhi, from Delhi to Poona and so on. So when they found that the "Muslim League was the power which was holding up their diabolical machinations," they tried the flanking movement at Poona, in place of the frontal attack. The "change" in Poona was only a change in name. The flanking movement had a plan and a strategy which was designed at Poona under the great general, because Jinnah did not believe that Gandhi was not a party to it. "The Congress," said Jinnah, "was willing to throw overboard the general, Mr. Gandhi, provided the British Government will do this, namely, make a declaration of immediate independence and the freedom of India unconditionally and the future constitution, the final constitution to be framed after the war, but the provisional constitution

should be a 'National Government' at the Centre, responsible to a Hindu-dominated Legislature. That was the Poona proposal and Mr. Gandhi, of course, was seemingly thrown overboard. And Mr. Kripalani, Secretary of the All-India Congress Committee, said that they went to the length of 'selling the leader.' They sold their leader, and Ahimsa which was their creed was also buried in the City of Poona, because the Congress was ready to assist the British in the prosecution of the war and the defence of India. What was *haram*, as we say, became *halal* at Poona."

Jinnah referred to the Bombay Conference and its proposals. He said that the Hindu Mahasabha had already repudiated and disowned the Conference. He thought that Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru "on his own admission" had been "political orphan" for a very long time. This "political orphan" had been caught in a trap, because there was one obsession with him that in the event of supreme danger for India, he alone, as the "supreme intellect," could rescue India. His motives might be good; his intentions might be good. "But I am afraid," Mohammad Ali Jinnah said, "the Sapru Conference was like a Dutch army without any privates and I think the correct answer of the League was given in that very Conference by the clear-headed, experienced Hindu political leader,

Sir Chimanlal Setalvad. If Sir Tej Bahadur had only followed his advice, he would have saved himself. What shall I say to this pose which is now thrust upon him by the wire-pullers from behind? The Bombay proposal is nothing but, in another name, the flanking movement and a second edition of the Poona proposal of a so-called National Government." If anybody read the memorandum explaining the Bombay resolution, Jinnah said, there could be no doubt left in him. He did not wish to go into the details of the Bombay resolution and the memorandum. But he would tell them as shortly as he could that Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru was entirely on the wrong path, on the wrong line, and Jinnah was sorry that Sir Tej had been caught in the trap by the wire-pullers and other organisations behind this move.

Winding up his speech, Jinnah uttered what he himself characterised as "a note of warning," in slow and deliberate accents. "I think I have taken much more time of yours than I thought I would," he concluded, "but it seems to me that I can only wind up on a note—a note which is really of warning, to the British Government; because, after all, they are in possession of this land and the Government of this sub-continent. Please stop," he declared, "please stop your policy of appeasement towards those who are bent upon frustrating the war effort, doing their

best to oppose the prosecution of the war and the defence of India at this critical moment. Do you want at this moment to place them in a superior and dominant position now and after the war? Change the corner-stone of the British policy in this country. You are not loyal to those who are willing to stand by you and who sincerely desire to support you. But you desire to placate those who have the greatest nuisance-value in political and economic fields. Give up the dominant feature of this policy and the character of this policy. It is that you are trying to get on with those who do not want to get on with you. If you want honestly the support and the co-operation of Muslim India, place your cards on the table and take action."

After the Madras session of the League a long controversy arose between Jinnah and Sapru. The latter's release of the correspondence between himself and Gandhi on the question of a Hindu-Muslim settlement brought forward the point clearly that Gandhi was in no mood to encourage or take part in the solution of the problem and that he was biding his time for something else.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE FALSE KEY

His Excellency the Viceroy was now in a fix. The policy of expanding the executive Council had been laid down. The Congress had " refused even to discuss the matter and proceeded to launch a curious campaign of Mr. Gandhi's devising. " The Muslim League was willing to take the responsibility but perhaps it did not go well with British policy to take Muslim leadership alone into confidence. The proposals of the Sapru Conference had no sanction behind them. The only course, therefore, was to proceed with the expansion of the Council in spite of these organisations and approach individuals who could be made to stand by the British policy regardless of public opinion and their party affiliations. India is a country where persons of the non-descript character are found in abundance. They are the products of sustained and systematic British efforts. The result was that on the 21st of July 1941, a *communique* announced the names of the members of the expanded Executive Council and the new " National Defence Council. "

The Viceroy, however, wished to communicate his decision to Mohammad Ali

Jinnah previous to its publication and his message came through the Governor of Bombay, Sir Roger Lumley, who was at the time at Ganeshkhind, the summer headquarters of the Governor. Sir Roger Lumley made a telephone call to Jinnah and requested him to see him, but the latter being indisposed, could do so only after he had recovered his health. Sir Roger then sent the Viceregal message through an official messenger in the form of a letter, to which the Muslim leader replied at once making a vigorous protest against the inclusion of some of the members of the League as the reader will have the occasion to see presently. But, after the decision of the Viceroy was made public, Jinnah had to clear his position and demand an explanation from his followers who had acted contrary to the declared policy of the League and issued the following statement to the press.

"The *communique* announcing the decision regarding the expansion of the Viceroy's Executive Council and the so-called National Defence Council is to be most deeply regretted. It will not secure the whole-hearted, willing and genuine support if that is what is honestly required, of Muslim India, for the simple reason that the persons chosen and nominated by the Viceroy are neither real representatives of the people nor will they command the confidence and trust of the

Muslims. The statesmanship of the Viceroy is leading him from one mistake to another, and it is most unfortunate, and it is very painful to note that the Viceroy should have canvassed members of the Muslim League over the head of the leader and the executive of the party, and it is still more painful that some of the members of the League should have succumbed. When the offer of the Viceroy was made last August it was not acceptable to the All-India Muslim League on the unanswerable ground that it did not give the representatives of the Muslim League a real and substantial share in the authority and power of the Government. How can anyone consider that the present retrograde decision would secure the approval and co-operation of Muslim India? I congratulate the Viceroy on having created defections in the ranks of the Muslim League by securing the services of the Muslim League Premiers and some other members of the League who have associated themselves with this scheme without reference or knowledge of the leader or the executive of the organisation. This will not, in any way, make the Muslim League swerve from its declared policy and these manoeuvres will not help the Government but on the contrary will create bitterness which fortunately did not exist, however emphatically we had disapproved of the policy that had been pursued by the Government in this behalf before the present announcement. The action and the

conduct of the Muslim League Premiers and the members of the League who have associated themselves with this scheme without reference and knowledge of the executive of the League in the expansion of the Viceroy's Executive Council and the constitution of the National Defence Council, as announced in the *communique*, will have to be considered and dealt with as soon as possible."

The question concerning the members of the League joining the Executive Council and the National Defence Council was discussed at the meeting of the League Working Committee in August. It was a matter now of the prestige of the Muslim organisation and the test of the strength of Jinnah. Hindus were eagerly looking forward for a clash between the League and the British Government or at any rate between Jinnah and his lieutenants. It was hoped that Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan of the Punjab, Sir Mohammad Saadullah of Assam and Maulvi Fazlul Haq of Bengal would revolt against the League. Punjab officialdom had already managed to send a few members of the Punjab League in the form of a delegation to the President of the All-India Muslim League with a view to vindicating the action of Sir Sikandar in joining the Defence Council under the pretext that the Muslim Premiers joined in their official capacity and that their action did not amount to flouting the mandate

of the League, since it had allowed its Provincial Branches to continue their activities in support of the war effort. But the letter from the Governor of Bombay containing the message of the Viceroy to Jinnah had a different story to tell. Mr. Amery, the Secretary of State for India, had also made frank statements in the House of Commons that the inclusion of these Muslims was meant to demonstrate to the world that "the great Muslim community" was behind the war effort in spite of the Viceroy turning down the offer of the All-India Muslim League. The position was, therefore, quite clear. Had this attitude of the British Government gone unchallenged it would have meant that Musalmans were not actually behind the League but were willing to dance to the tune of the Viceroy. During the meeting of the Working Committee, therefore, the League President had no difficulty in convincing Sir Sikandar and others that Muslim Premiers were wrong in joining the National Defence Council. Sir Sikandar, therefore, resigned from the Council forthwith. Sir Mohammad Saadullah of Assam also followed suit. Maulvi Fazlul Haq, who could not attend the Working Committee hesitated a little bit, but ultimately fell in with the others.

The Government of India tried to explain away the whole affair and issued a *communique*. In reply to that Mohammad Ali

Jinnah issued the following statement to the press:

"The explanation that has been given, presumably on behalf of Lord Linlithgow, in the *communique* dated August 27, 1941, from Simla, regarding the recent decision of the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League, and the statement which has been issued by Sikandar Hayat Khan, consequent on his resignation from the National Defence Council, is a lengthy and wordy explanation of points, other than the real and vital one, which forms the basis of the resignation of Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, namely, that according to the text of the message of His Excellency the Viceroy, Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan was appointed as a representative of the great Muslim community. This message I received through the Governor of Bombay on the morning of July 21 and replied to it on the same day. It is surprising that no reference whatever has been made to it in the whole of the *communique*.

"The statement of Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan runs as follows: 'I was surprised, however, to find that in the letter dated July 21 last, from the Governor of Bombay to Mr. Jinnah, communicating to him a message from His Excellency the Viceroy, an entirely different complexion had been put on the basis of appointment of the Muslim Premiers on this

Council, and *inter alia* it was stated that we were being appointed to the Defence Council as representatives of the great Muslim community . . . I could not, in fairness to my province or the Muslim League, continue to serve on this Council.'

"According to Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan, the Viceroy was double-crossing him. That point is not met in the whole of the *communique*. Had he asked Sir Sikandar Hayat Khan to join the Council in his personal capacity, the probability is so obvious that he would have refused, or, at any rate, asked for time to consult the leader and the Executive of the Muslim organisation.

" This, evidently, did not suit the Viceroy to put it to him in that way, and he was sworn to strict secrecy.

" It is somewhat difficult to understand why the Working Committee has been dragged in the *communique*. The position of the Working Committee has been made quite clear by its resolution that the gentlemen concerned had clearly associated themselves with the scheme and thereby gone against the express decision and mandate of the League, and without any reference to the leader or the Executive of the organisation. The decision of the Working Committee, therefore, was that they should

resign from the National Defence Council. It is quite immaterial whether they accepted the invitation in their official capacity or otherwise.

"The various stages of the development of this plea that these gentlemen were appointed in their official capacity as Premiers, ending with the statement of the Secretary of State for India, which he was at pains to make on August 19, 1941, were merely intended to create confusion among the Muslim public and in the deliberations of the Working Committee, which was called upon to decide as to what action should be taken in the matter.

"Lastly, there is a reference of His Excellency the Viceroy in the *communique* to the conversation that he had with me on August 16, 1941. It is quite correct that he informed me that these gentlemen were invited in their official capacity; but in fairness to me it also ought to have been stated as to what was my reply. Here I give the substance of it. I said: 'It was quite immaterial to the real issue nevertheless, it is the first time I hear, on your authority, that they were invited in their official capacity; and even after my reply to your message which you must have received on the 21st or the 22nd, you did not suggest that they were appointed in their official capacity till to-day.'

I pointed out to him that this was quite contrary to the message that he was good enough to send to me through the Governor of Bombay. The text of the message did not leave the slightest doubt that they were appointed essentially as representatives of the great Muslim community, because they were Muslims of the highest eminence and capacity. I asked him to send for the copy of his message that he had sent to me and verify what I was saying, to which he replied that he would look it up.

"I think, in fairness to all parties concerned, that I should release to the press the full text of his message and my reply to it.

Confidential Government House,
Ganeshkhind, July 20, 1941

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

His Excellency the Viceroy has asked me to let you know his intentions on the matters which follow. I had hoped that I would be able to see you myself in order that I might convey this message to you personally, as was his desire, but, unfortunately, now that I am in a position to give you the message, I am not entirely fit, and I am therefore writing to convey it to you by this letter, which I am sending down to Bombay by messenger.

The Viceroy has continued to have very much in mind the whole situation in regard to the war effort and the association of non-official opinion with the prosecution of the war. The obstacles, however, to any settlement on the basis of the complete offer of August last, which emerged so clearly during the discussions last autumn, still exist, to his very great regret, as the last few months, and the reactions to the Secretary of State's statement in the House of Commons on April 22, have made clear. In these circumstances, it is equally clear that he cannot look for that degree of support from the major parties, for the proposals embodied in the August offer, which he desires. Nevertheless, the burden of the conduct of the war on the Central Government has greatly increased, and for administrative reasons it is essential to proceed with some increase in the membership of the Viceroy's Council within the terms of the August offer. The Viceroy, accordingly, is anxious that you should know that he is now, with the approval of His Majesty's Government, creating five new portfolios.

These new portfolios, and the names of the gentlemen by whom they have been accepted, are as follows: Supply:

Sir Homi Mody. Information: Sir Akbar Hydari. Civil Defence: Mr. Raghavendra Rao. Indian Overseas: Mr. Aney. Labour: Sir Firoz Khan Noon.

The Viceroy would also like you to know that he proposes to fill the vacancies arising in the portfolio of Law when Sir Zafarullah Khan goes to the Federal Court, and in the portfolio of Education when Sir Girja Shankar Bajpai takes up a mission overseas, by the appointment of Sir Sultan Ahmad and Mr. Sarkar.

In addition, the Viceroy does not feel that, because of the difficulty in securing the support of the major political parties, it is possible to delay further the more active association of non-official Indian opinion with the prosecution of the war. He is accordingly establishing, with the approval of His Majesty's Government, a National Defence Council. The Council will consist of some thirty members, nine of whom will be drawn from the Indian States. The Viceroy regards it as essential that the great Muslim community should be represented on that Council by persons of the highest prominence and capacity. He has,

accordingly, invited the Premiers of Assam, Bengal, the Punjab and Sind to serve as members on it, and he has extended invitations also to certain other prominent Muslims, such as Sir Mohammad Usman. He has considered whether he should invite you to let him have any suggestions as to the possible personnel for this Council, but being aware, as he is, of your general attitude, he has concluded that it would be preferable not to embarrass you by inviting you to make suggestions.

It is intended that an announcement about these changes will be made on the morning of Tuesday, July 22, and the Viceroy is anxious that you should have, through me, this advance information of what is proposed. I would have much preferred to have given you this message orally, but this letter contains the substance of it.

I hope that you have now fully recovered from your recent illness.

Yours sincerely
Roger Lumley

M. A. Jinnah Esq.
Bar-at-Law, M.L.A.
Mount Pleasant Road, Malabar Hill,
Bombay.

Jinnah's Reply

Mount Pleasant Road,
Malabar Hill,
July 21, 1941

Dear Sir Roger,

I am in receipt of your letter of July 20, 1941, which embodies the message of His Excellency the Viceroy. I deeply regret the decision taken by him with the approval of His Majesty's Government. I appreciate when he says that he does not wish to embarrass me by inviting me to make suggestions, knowing, as he does, not only my general attitude but that of the All-India Muslim League. Further, I cannot approve of his having invited the Muslim League Premiers or any other Muslim Leaguer under the scheme of the expansion of the Viceroy's Council as well as what is now called the National Defence Council, because it is obvious that it would embarrass the Muslim League organisation, and I do hope and trust that His Excellency will avoid such a contingency. Besides, it is hardly fair or proper that they should be approached by His Excellency over the head of the President and the Executive of the All-India Muslim League, knowing fully

well the position and the attitude that the All-India Muslim League has adopted.

It is stated in his message that the Viceroy regards it as essential that the 'great Muslim community should be represented by persons of the highest prominence and capacity.' Would it be creditable for any individual prominent or capable Muslim, belonging to an organisation, to accept the invitation contrary to the position and the attitude taken up by that organisation, and would it do any credit to the Government if they succeed in alluring him and create a breach in the organisation, in the hope that he may throw up his allegiance to the party to which he belongs in order to accept the invitation of His Excellency ? I maintain that the great Muslim community is represented authoritatively only by the All-India Muslim League organisation. Persistence in the course will not improve matters, but on the contrary it will lead to bitterness on the part of the Muslim League which up to the present moment, fortunately, does not exist, however emphatically we have disapproved of the policy which has been pursued by His Majesty's Government and the Viceroy.

Before I conclude, I am extremely sorry to hear that you are not well, and I hope that you will soon recover from your illness.

Thanking you for your kind inquiries. I am now much better.

Yours sincerely
M. A. Jinnah

His Excellency Sir Roger Lumley
Governor, Bombay.

Letter from Sir Roger Lumley to Mohammad Ali Jinnah

Government House,
Ganeshkhind, July 22, 1941

Dear Mr. Jinnah,

Thank you for your letter of July 21, the contents of which I have passed on to the Viceroy.

I am glad to hear you have recovered. Thanks for your kind inquiry. I am much better.

Yours sincerely
Roger Lumley

M. A. Jinnah Esq.

The Hindu press, Hindu leaders and the British Government were aghast at the result of the League decision, and political circles were bewildered at the statesmanship and political sagacity of Mohammad Ali Jinnah and the remarkable strength that the incident demonstrated was behind him. Innumerable messages of appreciation came from all parts of India including his Hindu friends and some very prominent Congressmen. The Hindu press in many cases could not but admire the independent character and patriotism of the great Muslim leader.

The position for the All-India Muslim League was, however, none too pleasant. The events that followed were unparalleled in the history of India and perhaps in the history of any other country. All forces that were directly or indirectly affected had combined together against the League. It so happened that although Fazlul Haq had resigned he had given indication that he had done so most reluctantly and not out of conviction; and almost immediately he showered epithets on the League and its President. Mr. Haq had been indirectly assured of the support of other elements that were against the League. The members of the League took great exception to Mr. Haq's outburst and Jinnah was once again flooded with letters. There were clearly two groups in Bengal—one favoured the postponement of

any definite decision, the other demanded Fazlul Haq's immediate expulsion from the League. Mohammad Ali Jinnah personally was inclined to give a long rope to the Bengal Premier in order to enable him to retrace his steps in the interest of the League and the Musalmans. And some time later at Jinnah's instance the League Working Committee after having received a letter from Fazlul Haq of implied apology treated the matter as closed.

But for Fazlul Haq, obviously, the matter remained still open and towards the close of the year 1941, he along with one of his colleagues, the Nawab of Dacca, deserted the League Party in the Bengal Assembly and started a new party in coalition with the Congress and other Hindu groups without any reference to the League either local or central. The European group in the Bengal Assembly too threw in their lot with Fazlul Haq. The new coalition, therefore, demonstrated beyond doubt that the Congress on the one hand and the British Government on the other were out to destroy the influence that the League had come to acquire in Bengal. Jinnah, therefore, demanded from Fazlul Haq an explanation of his conduct and the latter adopted his usual dilatory tactics. The whole of Bengal had now stood up against the "Bengal Tiger". It had become almost impossible for him

to come out in public, and so much was the public disapproval of him that one of the Bengal leaders said that in future Muslims would dread to give the future sons of Bengal the name Fazlul Haq. Mohammad Ali Jinnah was, therefore, pressed by Muslim Bengal to do away with him and consequently he expelled Fazlul Haq from the League in the month of December after due opportunities given for defence.

The curious attitude adopted by the Congress in Bengal in supporting Fazlul Haq was not surprising to those who understood the Congress game. The Congress High Command had followed a similar policy in other Muslim provinces. Analysing all these events Jinnah made the following remarks during his presidential address at the annual session of the All-India Muslim Students' Federation at Nagpur in December 1941.

"The Congress is against any war effort," said he. "They must preach and shout slogans for the prevention of war effort. But what have they done in Sind? There the Congress Party is supporting Mr. Allah Bux, although he is supporting the war effort. Not only is he supporting the war effort, but he has actually accepted the nomination in that so-called National Defence Council. When the question was raised, Mr. Gandhi left it conveniently to the Parliamentary Committee. And this Parliamentary

Committee decided that 'the peculiar circumstances of Sind were such that the Congress Party should not withdraw the support from the Premier, Mr. Allah Bux.'

"What did the Congress Party do in Assam? They are willing to support Mr. Chowdhry who mysteriously left the coalition party of which he was a member of the ministry. He has formed another party. What is the position of the Congress? They were ready and willing to support the ministry of Mr. Chowdhry. But the monkey came in to do justice between the two cats and Section 93, instead, has come in. Now both Sir Saadullah and Mr. Chowdhry can go to rest.

"And in Bengal, what is the Congress Party doing? The Congress Party has supported this new coalition ministry formed by Mr. Haq, aud by virtue of it he was able to form a Government and continue to be the Premier. It was by virtue of Mr. Haq being Premier that Lord Linlithgow announced that the latter will now have the honour of the support of this great Premier, who will now be, as Premier of Bengal, a member of this so-called National Defence Council. The Congress is supporting him.

"Now I make a Christmas gift of Mr. Haq to Lord Linlinthgow. I make another

New Year's gift of the Nawab of Dacca to the Governor of Bengal. I am very glad and I am happy that Muslim India is rid of these men who are guilty of the grossest treachery and betrayal of the Muslims. This shows that no man is indispensable to our organisation. If he is a traitor or a quisling he must be expelled. We shall now march more honourably and become stronger when we have weeded out this class of treacherous individuals. Now no power on earth can stop us from going forward and growing strong."

"My young friends," continued Mohammad Ali Jinnah, "with regard to the British Government and the League, I think I need not take up much of your time. Our position has been made repeatedly clear. Only the day before yesterday I issued a statement to the *News Chronicle* clarifying our position. Our position is just and I have no doubt it will continue to be so. I think no man, who has got the slightest sense of justice and fairness, can blame us. Our position has been that we recognise the common danger to Britain and India. We recognise the common peril. In the interests of our own people and to protect our own homes and hearths, we are willing to take our share in this peril. But we cannot do that successfully unless we are placed in a position of having real and genuine share in the responsibility and authority of the Government at the Centre and in the Provinces.

" The British Government is responsible for wasting these more than two years, and I think that if they go on delaying like this, they will regret and rue the day for following this sincere, honest and straightforward offer of the Muslim League to lapse."

This was of course the criticism of the opponents of the League and of those who were obstructing the realisation of the just aspirations of the Musalmans. He deplored the state of affairs and in a pathetic strain Jinnah appealed to his audience to cheer up and to his opponents to give up their futile attempts of obstruction. He spoke with lucidity that always marks his public orations and with the depth of feelings that occasions them.

" We feel that we have no friends. We feel that we are surrounded by opponents from all directions, and particularly about your province let me say a word. You are only four per cent in this province and you have gone through, as I said and as I anticipated in my speech as far back as 1937 at Lucknow, you have gone through the crucible of fire in this province. You have suffered. You are only four per cent in this province where an experiment is made of a new technique in the special laboratory of Wardha.*

* Wardha Scheme of Education.

"No possible means were spared to terrorise you, to hurl you down. Of course it is obvious that the policy that was pursued was not only unjust, not only unfair, but most cowardly to terrorise four per cent of the population.

"There is no reason for you to be dejected. I tell you from this platform that I never felt more proud in my life than when I saw and heard and read about the magnificent stand that the Muslims of this province took. Suffer we have to. No nation was built and ever achieved its ambition without suffering and sacrifice. Therefore, it is obvious that this wretched constitution which was enacted in 1935, and even the provincial part of it, has been dismal failure in this country. We shall have to revise our notions and our ideals. But I want the Muslims of this province to be cheerful and keep a stout heart, and I assure you that nothing will succeed which is unjust, unfair and dishonest."

"I was telling you," continued Mohammad Ali Jinnah, "that so far as the Muslim League is concerned we are going faster than many people imagine. In our unity, in our solidarity and in our progress in various directions, all that I urge upon you, my young friends and others present here, is that the key is in your hands. Do not depend upon anybody. You know, I will not preach

aggressiveness. The Muslim League has always been on the defensive. I have always said it. It is no concession and it is no favour.

"I have always said that we have no designs on the Hindu community or any other of the sister communities. But we cannot and we shall not surrender or submit to their domination and their *raj* in this sub-continent. Look at the position now. You find on the one hand the present political situation and how the different organisations—Hindu organisations—are active. You have got, in the first instance, the most powerful and the best organised Hindu body, the Congress.

"I cannot understand," said Jinnah, "that even today the Congress leaders have not the honesty and the frankness to recognise that they do not represent the Muslims. What is the use of talking about the *divine Rashtrapati*, taking him as a show-boy? Whom are you misleading except yourselves? Whom are you deluding except yourselves? You know, I know, the world knows, that today there is no doubt left in the mind of any man who has got a grain of common-sense that the All-India Muslim League is the only authoritative and representative organisation of the Muslims. Bardoli is still in darkness and I pray from Nagpur, in the vicinity of Wardha and Sevagram, that God may throw some light on Bardoli."

CHAPTER XXVII

CRIPPS MISSION AND AFTER

After the expulsion of Fazlul Haq from the League the situation in Bengal had become very acute. The Bengal Muslim leaders had hitherto thought that as they were in the seat of power it would not be difficult to organise their province whenever they wished, and had, therefore, neglected the work of rousing political consciousness among the people. But when it was found that they could be betrayed by their own men they woke up to the realities and in order to achieve the object in the shortest possible time appealed to Mohammad Ali Jinnah to visit Bengal and preside over the Provincial Muslim League Conference in February, which he consequently did at Serajganj. During the course of his presidential address, Mohammad Ali Jinnah outlined the various forces that were working in Bengal and also throughout India against the League and the vital interests of Musalmans. He explained at length the tactics that Fazlul Haq had adopted in his political game in order to maintain his leadership in the Bengal Assembly. He pointed out the character of the Haq Ministry that was then functioning in Bengal and exposed the hand that the local Governor

had in the affairs. Jinnah placed before his audience the position of the League, and gave an account of the League activities, elucidated the Muslim goal of Pakistan and the Muslim attitude towards the future constitutional problem of India. In fact his Serajganj speech shows what remarkable grasp Jinnah has over Indian politics and in view of the autobiographical importance of this speech it is appended at the end of this book. (Appendix V).

The entry of Japan into the war and the dangers that were brought to India by the Japanese successes mark the early part of the year 1942. The surrender of Singapore on February 15, the withdrawal from Rangoon on March 7, the capture by the Japanese of the Andaman Islands on March 23 and the bombing of Vizagapatam and Cocanada on April 6, had already tended to influence the Congress opinion and of the British. Further, the growing menace of Japanese aggression in the East Indies and Philippines and on the Burma front, the escape from India of Subhas Chandra Bose, probably to Japan, and the claim of a few Hindu leaders for a cultural affinity with Asiatic and Oriental countries had to a great extent changed the complexion of Indian politics, and consequently the war began to be viewed from a different angle altogether. It had moved the Congress High Command to

relax their policy towards non-violence a bit, but the fundamental question of forming a so-called national government at the Centre was not given up. The attitude of ignoring the wishes of other important elements in India, particularly of the Musalmans, was also not altered. In fact, some of the Congress Hindus were seriously considering the alternative of a possible occupation of India by the Japanese.

The British Parliament was also naturally much perturbed and it was contemplated that an all-out attempt must be made for consolidating and mobilising all forces of India for the successful prosecution of the war. It was rumoured that under the impact of the Japanese onslaught, the British Parliament would make a departure from their declared policy towards Indian constitutional problem. The declaration made by Mohammad Ali Jinnah regarding such a move, therefore, came as a timely warning to all concerned. "If any new declaration is made on the part of the British Government, departing from the declaration of August 8, 1940, as to the future constitution of India, or any proposal or move, which in any way would militate against the Muslim demand for Pakistan, or prejudge it, or denounce it in any way, as seems to be the main effort of the Hindu leaders, it will not only create an unprecedented catastrophe but result in grave disaster

at this critical juncture of the war and war efforts, apart from the fact that it will constitute a gross breach of faith with Muslim India," said he. "Muslim India is fighting and struggling for survival and for its right to self-determination, whereas the Congress and other Hindu organisations are speeding to assume supremacy and domination over the Muslims as an All-India minority by establishing one Central Government over the whole of India, and thus to dominate and control even those zones where the Muslims are in a solid majority and interfere even in their internal affairs by virtue of the vital powers which must remain vested in the Central Government, such as Defence, Communications, Customs and Finance and various other executive and administrative powers."

It was in these circumstances that the British Prime Minister announced in the House of Commons that Sir Stafford Cripps was to proceed to India with the Draft Declaration that embodied the unanimous views of the War Cabinet regarding the Indian deadlock. A full account of the various stages of negotiations between Sir Stafford Cripps and Indian leaders and their final result have already been fully explained by Professor R. Coupland of the Oxford University in his pamphlet, *The Cripps Mission*. The Professor was at the time in

India and assisted Sir Stafford in his stupendous task. A casual mention of the Cripps Proposals is, however, necessary here specially as far as they concern Jinnah and his political activity.

The announcement of Cripps Mission created a sense of triumph in the Congress ranks, as Sir Stafford had many friends among the Congressmen including Jawaharlal Nehru. His remarks in the past about the Muslim League bitterly criticising its policy had, on the other hand, alarmed Muslim India considerably. On the 23rd of March, which synchronised with the celebration of "Pakistan Day" and with Sir Stafford's arrival in New Delhi, Jinnah declared that Musalmans were afraid of the fact that Sir Stafford was a friend of the Congress who had given out his preconceived notion against the League. He had enjoyed the hospitality of Jawaharlal Nehru at Anand Bhawan. That was all true, but Musalmans should not be afraid on that score. He appealed to Muslim India not to get "cold feet." He made it clear that Sir Stafford Cripps had come to India not in his personal capacity but as a representative of the British Government. He, therefore, advised the Musalmans to be patient until the proposal, the offer or the scheme of His Majesty's Government which Sir Stafford had brought with him, was put forward before them.

He assured his audience that if this scheme or proposal were detrimental to the interests of Muslims, they would never accept it. He warned the Government, at the same time, against an attempt to suppress the Muslim League or create disruption among their ranks.

The document which Sir Stafford Cripps brought to India and published on March 30, covered two periods, the immediate period after the end of hostilities, when a constitution-making body was to establish an Indian Union, and the interim war period, when the Executive Council, under the existing Constitution, was to be composed, with the exception of the Defence Member, of leaders of the Indian political parties, until such time as the constitution-making body had completed its work. The Draft Declaration ran as follows :

"The conclusions of the British War Cabinet as set out below are those which Sir Stafford Cripps has taken with him for discussion with the Indian leaders and the question as to whether they will be implemented will depend upon the outcome of these discussions which are now taking place.

"His Majesty's Government, having considered the anxieties expressed in this

country and in India as to the fulfilment of the promises made in regard to the future of India, have decided to lay down in precise and clear terms the steps which they propose shall be taken for the earliest possible realisation of self-government in India. The object is the creation of a new Indian Union which shall constitute a Dominion, associated with the United Kingdom and the other Dominions by a common allegiance to the Crown, but equal to them in every respect, in no way subordinate in any aspect of its demestic or external affairs.

"His Majesty's Government, therefore, make the following declaration :

"(*a*) Immediately upon the cessation of hostilities, steps shall be taken to set up in India, in the manner described hereafter, an elected body charged with the task of framing a new Constitution for India.

"(*b*) Provision shall be made, as set out below, for the participation of the Indian States in the constitution-making body.

"(*c*) His Majesty's Government undertake to accept and implement forthwith the Constitution so framed subject only to :

(*i*) the right of any Province of British India that is not prepared to accept

the new Constitution to retain its present constitutional position provision being made for its subsequent accession if it so decides. With such non-acceding Provinces, should they so desire, His Majesty's Government will be prepared to agree upon a new Constitution, giving them the same full status as Indian Union, and arrived at by a procedure analogous to that here laid down;

(*ii*) the signing of a Treaty which shall be negotiated between His Majesty's Government and the constitution-making body. This Treaty will cover all necessary matters arising out of the complete transfer of responsibility from British to Indian hands; it will make provision, in accordance with the undertakings given by His Majesty's Government, for the protection of racial and religious minorities; but will not impose any restriction on the power of the Indian Union to decide in the future its relationship to the other Member States of the British Commonwealth.

Whether or not an Indian State elects

to adhere to the Constitution, it will be necessary to negotiate a revision of its Treaty arrangements, so far as this may be required in the new situation ;

(*d*) the constitution-making body shall be composed as follows, unless the leaders of Indian opinion in the principal communities agree upon some other form before the end of hostilities :

Immediately upon the result being known of the provincial elections which will be necessary at the end of hostilities, the entire membership of the Lower Houses of the Provincial Legislatures shall, as a single electoral college, proceed to the election of the constitution-making body by the system of proportional representation. This new body shall be in number about one-tenth of the number of the electoral college.

Indian States shall be invited to appoint representatives in the same proportion to their total population as in the case of the representatives of British India as a whole, and with the same powers as the British Indian members.

(*e*) During the critical period which now faces India and until the new Constitution can be framed, His Majesty's Government must, inevitably, bear the responsibility

for and retain control and direction of the defence of India as part of their world war effort, but the task of organising to the full the military, moral, and material resources of India must be the responsibility of the Government of India with the co-operation of the peoples of India. His Majesty's Government desire and invite the immediate and effective participation of the leaders of the principal sections of the Indian people in the counsels of their country, of the Commonwealth, and of the United Nations. Thus they will be enabled to give their active and constructive help in the discharge of a task which is vital and essential for the future freedom of India."

Throughout the negotiations the provision of the non-accession of Provinces of British India formed the crux of the controversy, specially in view of the fact that Sir Stafford Cripps had in his broadcast speech on the 30th of March declared that in the great sub-continent of India there were more than one people—there were many peoples and races—as there were in the great sub-continent of Russia. "Our object is to give to the Indian peoples full self-government, with complete freedom as to how they will devise and organise their own constitution." To Congress it was quite enough, and soon after the Draft Declaration was published, the Hindu press started a powerful

SMILES OF MUTUAL APPRECIATION



Sir Stafford Cripps Mr. M. A. Jinnah

campaign of propaganda against it. The Congress objected from the very beginning to "several important and far-reaching proposals for the future." The Congress "had imagined that the new government would function with full powers as a Cabinet with the Viceroy acting as a constitutional head." But in public the Congress leaders took great pains to create an impression that the final breakdown of negotiations came on account of the portfolio of Defence. On the authority of Sir Stafford himself it is clear that "none of these things were the real cause of the breakdown of the negotiations. In their final letter addressed to me, the Congress Working Committee stated that the temporary form of government envisaged during the war was not such as to enable them to join the government. They have two suggestions to remedy the situation: First, an immediate change of the Constitution, a plan which everyone else has admitted to be wholly impracticable while the war is proceeding; and, second, that there should be full national government with a Cabinet of Indian leaders, untrammelled by any control by the Viceroy or the British Government. Realise what this means. Government for an indefinite period by a set of persons nominated by Indian parties responsible to no Legislature, nor any electorate, incapable of being changed; and a majority of whom would be in a position to dominate large minorities. It is easy to understand

that great minorities in India would never accept such a suggestion. Nor could His Majesty's Government, who have given pledges to those minorities, consent to their being placed unprotected while the existing Constitution lasts under a central and possibly inimical majority rule. It would be breach of all the pledges given. Such a solution may sound simple and effective to those who have no knowledge of the deep, communal divisions in India, but it is in fact wholly impracticable and would never be accepted by very large sections of the Indian peoples."

The resolution of the Congress Working Committee also laid emphasis on this point. The Committee recognised that future independence might be implicit in the proposals, but the accompanying provisions and restrictions were such that real freedom might well become an illusion. The Congress, in fact, went a step further and opined that "the British War Cabinet's new proposals relate principally to the future, upon the cessation of hostilities. The Committee, while recognising that self-determination for the people of India is accepted in principle in an uncertain future, regret that this is fettered and circumscribed and that certain provisions have been introduced which gravely imperil the development of a free and united national government and the establishment of a democratic State. Even the constitution-making

body is so constituted that the people's right of self-determination is vitiated by the introduction of non-representative elements." It is, therefore, clear that the Congress still regarded the League as a " non-representative element " and by putting forward the claim of Pakistan vitiated the right of self-determination of the people of India, of which the Congress regarded itself as the sole spokesman. This was a position which no understanding person could accept, much less Sir Stafford Cripps on whom rested the responsibility of safeguarding the pledges given to Musalmans by the British Government.

The position of the Musalmans and Mohammad Ali Jinnah as their spokesman has been none too enviable. Dealing with this Professor Coupland says: " The adoption of Pakistan as the League's objective has tended to stiffen the political deadlock. It was already difficult enough for Mr. Jinnah to co-operate with the Government's war effort, unless Congress did, for it would expose him to the charge—a wholly false charge, as his record shows—of being a poorer Indian patriot than Pandit Nehru and his colleagues. But there was now another difficulty. To join the existing Central Government, associated as it is with a Central legislature, both based on the principle of a united India, would prejudice the future of the Muslim cause. It would seem like a tacit acceptance of a con-

stitutional system which foreshadowed the imposition, not only on seven Provinces, but on India as a whole, of that Hindu majority rule which Pandit Nehru in an unguarded moment had once described as a 'Congress Raj,'* a system which flatly negatived Pakistan." This is of course the Professor's way of putting things. It may, however, be added that it is not quite correct to say that Mohammad Ali Jinnah had to wait for the Congress to come in for co-operation with the Government's war effort, for as far back as November 1939 when Lord Linlithgow made the first attempt to secure India's co-operation, Mohammad Ali Jinnah and the League were willing to pool all resources of Muslim India for the successful prosecution of war and consequent events, of which the reader is well aware, prove beyond doubt that it was the British who refused the Muslim hand of co-operation. The British Government wanted to relegate the whole of Muslim India to a position of a mere minority which was against the facts and against their oft-repeated declarations, and this Mohammad Ali Jinnah could not possibly accept.

"The purpose of the non-accession provisions was manifest," says the Professor. "They embodied the British Government's considered reply to the Muslim claim of

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**The Unity of India* (London, 1931), p. 63.

Pakistan. It was unfair to say, as Hindu critics promptly said, that they directly encouraged the partition of India. On the contrary, they pointed the way by which alone (in the present writer's view) partition can be avoided. The story of the forbidden fruit applies to great affairs of life as much as small. The certain method of whetting a nation's or a community's appetite for something is to say that it is the one thing they may not have. Thus, just as there is small chance of India wanting to stay in the British Commonwealth unless she is free to go out, so the best hope of a single Indian Union is to assure the people of the predominantly Muslim areas that they need not join it unless they wish. As Sir Stafford had said in his broadcast, the door must be left open.* And, besides this point of principle, there was the practical question. How did the Hindus propose to compel the Muslims into the Union? Only, it would seem, by civil war.

"The reaction of Mr. Jinnah and the Muslim League to this part of the scheme was naturally favourable. They can scarcely have expected, indeed, that the British Government would go so far to meet their claim, since for months past they had made no secret of

*Professor Coupland in a footnote says: "In many of my conversations with Hindus, I urged this method of dealing with Pakistan; and several of them, including two leading Congressmen, agreed with me.

their anxiety lest the Congress demand for the ruling out of Pakistan from all discussion of the future should be satisfied. Owing to the 'weightage' given to the minorities in the electoral arrangements in the Punjab, the proportion of Muslims in the legislature does not exactly correspond with the proportion of their population. In the legislature it is 50·9 per cent, of the population 57·1 per cent. The position in Bengal is still less well-balanced: the corresponding figures there are 49·2 per cent and 54·7 per cent. Since it seemed improper that so momentous a decision should depend on so narrow a margin of votes, Sir Stafford proposed that, if the majority in favour of accession was less than 60 per cent of the legislature, the minority should be entitled to demand a plebiscite of the adult male population. This proposal was not, of course, acceptable to the non-Muslims. The scales, they said, were being weighed still more heavily in favour of partition. But it apparently contented Mr. Jinnah. It was understood that he and his Working Committee were now prepared to accept the Draft Declaration and bring the League into the National Government for the whole-hearted prosecution of the war, provided that the Congress Working Committee did the same.

"When in the event Congress rejected the Draft Declaration, Mr. Jinnah, as had always been expected, followed suit. But the

tone of his rejection was markedly less hostile than that of the Congress President. Nor did he reject it all along the line. His one serious complaint was that it did not explicitly pronounce in favour of Pakistan. He expressed satisfaction at the recognition of its possibility implied in the non-adherence scheme; but the establishment of a single Indian Union 'appears to be the main object of His Majesty's Government, the creation of more than one Union being relegated only to the realm of remote possibility.' Nor did the granting of the right of non-accession, such as it was, do full justice to the Muslims; it was unfair, in particular, to base it on the existing Provinces, whose frontiers had been drawn for administrative convenience only. The Draft Declaration, in fact, went some way to meet the Muslim case, but not far enough."

A fortnight after the Mission's departure, the Congress "stage-management" summond a session of the All-India Congress Committee at Allahabad for April 29. This endorsed the resolution of the Working Committee rejecting the Cripps proposals at Delhi. The Allahabad meeting is important from the point of view of Muslims. Shortly before the A. I. C. C., Rajagopalacharia, the ex-Premier of Madras, had summoned in Madras a meeting of Congressmen belonging to the Provincial Legislature and of other

local Congress leaders, and obtained their support for a programme which was totally opposed to that of the Working Committee. This meeting urged that "it is impossible for the people to think in terms of neutrality or passivity during an invasion by an enemy Power; neither is it practicable to organise any effective defence independently and uncoordinated with the defence measures of the Government." Therefore a national administration should be framed; and for that end the claims of the Muslim League for recognition of the right of separation of certain areas from united India upon the ascertainment of the wishes of the people of such areas should be acknowledged, if it were persisted in when the time comes for framing a constitution for India; and the Muslim League should be invited for a consultation for the installation of a national government to meet the present emergency.

Another resolution urged that, in view of the imminent danger to Madras, a popular government should be established there, and the Muslim League should be invited to participate in it. Rajagopalacharia had resigned from the Congress Working Committee in order to lead this movement. The more important of his aforetime colleagues violently denounced him in public; and the obedient A.I.C.C. on May 2 rejected the proposal for negotiations with the Muslim League and the

very idea of self-determination for any part of India. Thus the same leaders, who a few weeks before were negotiating with the emissary of the British War Cabinet for control of the armed defence of the country, now wrapped themselves in the formula of "non-violent non-co-operation"; and all professions of consideration for minorities were belied by a flat refusal to discuss the main claim of the Muslim League. There was nothing new in this. This record shows that the aim of the Congress has been to use the war for wresting power for itself.* In place of Rajagopalacharia's resolution the Congress passed another one moved by Jagat Narain Lal, which for all intents and purposes completely negatived the Muslim claim for self-determination.

The purpose of the Cripps Mission may have been anything. But its result went to some halting extent in favour of Muslim India. The fact that Mohammad Ali Jinnah alone represented the Muslim case authoritatively as President of the All-India Muslim League demonstrated and added to the great popularity of the League and the support it had of the Musalmans of India. The Congress President, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, was invariably accompanied by Jawaharlal Nehru and even then greater weight was

*_Times of India_: Congress and the Axis.

given to the opinion of Gandhi than that of the Congress President. All these factors clearly exposed the fiction that the Congress was not a Hindu body, and led to the final conclusion that "broadly speaking, Hindu public opinion is Congress opinion, and Muslim public opinion is League opinion." Dealing with this aspect of the Cripps Mission, Professor Coupland writes that the personal impression made by Sir Stafford on the Indian public might be blurred for a moment, but it would not be forgotten. His high office, his own previous record, his frank answers to pressmen, his interviews with politicians, which were wholly friendly to the very end, above all, the fact that his word was trusted, all that had left such a mark on the Indian mind—and on the British too—that the tone and temper of future dealings between Britain and India would be different now from what they had been. "Secondly, Sir Stafford, by constant and candid discussion of it in the open forum, made the Indian public face the communal problem—and that, not her relations with Britain, is India's major problem—more squarely than they had ever done before. Some Congressmen may still reiterate their old charges against Britain on this head, but Mr. Gandhi himself has now admitted that independence is impossible until Indians themselves have 'solved the communal tangle.'

Still more significant is Mr. Rajagopal-

acharia's renewal of his efforts to bring about a Hindu-Muslim understanding. He has proposed that Congress should accept in principle the Muslim claim to Pakistan. And this time the opposition of his colleagues and the A.I.C.C. has not silenced him. He has resigned from the Working Committee and declared his intention of trying to win over public opinion and Congress itself to his policy. Clearly a new realism on this vital issue has been inspired by those discussions at Delhi. Thus, on each of its two sides, as regards both Anglo-Indian and Hindu-Muslim relations, the Mission has opened a new phase of the Indian question. Congress leaders may still talk in the old terms ; but Congress is not all India, and even in its own ranks the voice of the younger generation can be heard asking, as it does in other countries, for new ideals and policies to meet the needs of a new age. And when the tide of war has turned and the Japanese menace, which accounts for so much of the present malaise in India, has disappeared, the solution of one-half of her two-fold problem will have been made easier and that of the other half at any rate less difficult by the British Government's policy and the manner in which it was explained by Sir Stafford Cripps at Delhi."

CHAPTER XXVIII

" OPEN REBELLION "

The statesmanlike policy that Jinnah had laid down for Muslim India in regard to the war by allowing the Muslim provinces to continue their normal activities conduced to the consolidation of his position both in India and abroad. To the Musalmans it meant a greater security of their interests. To the British it demonstrated that Jinnah's politics were realistic and that he was no mere visionary. The continued practical suggestions that he advanced during this period for the better understanding and better co-operation which would result in the greatest benefit to India and in the most successful prosecution of the war made a considerable impression on the British public. In this he was helped by various factors. As a matter of fact, the Congress policy of repeated blunders beginning by their resignations from the ministries and of pursuing the vague course of hollow idealism coupled with impossible demands, very often militating against the interests of important sections of the vast population of India, specially against those of Musalmans; the Congress game of using the war as an instrument to wrest power for itself, of ignoring the

prevalent conditions and of refusing to recognise the existence of weighty problems that faced the Indian politics, contributed a great deal to Jinnah's phenomenal success.

The extraordinary strength and prestige that Mohammad Ali Jinnah had achieved during the last few years, by organising the scattered forces of Muslim India and earning their gratitude and following on the one hand and on the other by bringing home to the British Government the justice of the Muslim demand of Pakistan by slow but steady degrees, had served to drive the Congress to a point of desperation. The Cripps offer was indeed an indication that the British policy was inclined to take a turn for the better. For Jinnah, therefore, things were becoming more and more satisfactory.

For the Congress, however, it was now necessary to get out of the rut in which it found itself and something had got to be done to keep its present leadership intact. In this connection the growing threat to India of Japanese aggression had to be taken into account. There were only two courses open—either to retrace the steps and go back to the Legislatures and work the constitution, or to start a programme with a dual policy and keep everything in suspense. As far as the former course was concerned it was obviously fraught with difficulties. In

the first place after the failure of the Cripps Mission it would not be easy to convince Hindu India that such a move would not amount to a complete surrender on the part of the Congress. Secondly, the British Government would now dictate its own terms for such an arrangement. Thirdly, it would necessarily introduce the Muslim League as an important factor to be reckoned with. Fourthly, due to the uncertainty of the war situation, it would be futile for the Congress either to take a "pro-imperialist" attitude or to adopt an anti-Axis policy. It was, therefore, natural that the Congress should have decided upon something which would in the first instance give the Hindus something in which they would find themselves engaged and forget the blunders committed by their leaders. It would also perhaps divert the attention of the Musalmans of India from the possibility, however remote it was, of the establishment of Pakistan, round which it had come to be centred by the Cripps Proposals.

Against this background the next move of the Congress was conceived and carried out. In May, Gandhi declared that he considered 'the vivisection of India to be a sin.' What was more, he was firmly of the opinion 'that there was no unity whilst the third party was there to prevent it.' The British Government, he said, had 'created the

artificial division and it kept it up.' In its presence, he declared, both Hindus and Muslims and for that matter 'all seemingly conflicting or disgruntled interest and elements would look to it for support and would get it.' He said, their interests was greater than the independence of the country. The implied meaning of Gandhi's writings was that whoever did not coalesce with the Congress programme was essentially selfish, and consequently against India's independence. As far as the Musalmans were concerned Gandhi committed another big mistake in so far as he underrated the strength of Jinnah and his organisation. He apparently thought that Muslim leadership had no hold over Muslim public opinion and that any action seemingly for the purpose of attaining independence would split them apart.

Gandhi went on developing this theme in spite of protests and objections raised by the Musalmans of India and in August, in a speech before the All-India Congress Committee at Bombay, he openly remarked that Mohammad Ali Jinnah had been a Congressman but now he seemed to be misguided. "Mr. Jinnah," said he, "does not seem to believe in the Congress programme and in the Congress demand. But I cannot wait any longer for India's freedom. I cannot wait till Mr. Jinnah is converted, for the immediate consummation of Indian

freedom." The implication was that Jinnah did not stand for the independence of India —a thing which Gandhi himself knows to be the greatest libel on the Muslim leader.

What was the move that Gandhi launched? It was "the formula of inviting the British power to withdraw." There was obviously nothing wrong in doing that. But in view of his false charges against the Muslims it had come to be regarded by them with acute suspicion. The confirmation of Muslim apprehension came from Gandhi himself when a few days later he qualified this amazing invitation. He wrote: "If, however, the withdrawal is orderly and voluntary, the British not only gain a moral height but secure the ungrudging friendship of a great nation." It is, therefore, clear—and subsequent correspondence between Gandhi and the Viceroy left no doubt—that this so-called invitation was meant to induce the British to withdraw 'in an orderly manner' and hand over power to the Hindus, whose ungrudging friendship he had promised. Gandhi said, he was fighting for liberty in order to evolve a National Government suited to the genius of India. But explaining the character of this 'National Government' he declared, "whatever it is, in order to be stable, it has to represent the masses in the fullest sense of the term."

This would virtually mean the Hindu Raj. What was behind this demand of a National Government? When viewed in the proper perspective it reveals itself like this: In the event of Axis entry into India this National Government would be in a position to decide the fate of India. In the event of the defeat of the Axis and British remaining in India it would be in a position to decide the fate of the Musalmans.

It must, however, be said to the credit of Gandhi that this 'Quit India' move created a great deal of sensation in the country. There was a feeling among the Hindus that it meant a complete annihilation of the leadership of Jinnah and that after the movement was in full swing the Musalmans would fall out of his influence. The British Government were concerned with the impending threat to the administration of law and order and were making arrangements to tighten the police control in order to prevent a civil war. The Musalmans felt that it might result in serious Hindu-Muslim clashes and bring about a complete estrangement between Hindus and Muslims. Mohammad Ali Jinnah himself was apprehensive of such a consequence and had issued an appeal to Musalmans to view the Congress move with equanimity and calmness and wait for the decision of the League Committee which was due to meet in the middle of August. But he was sure that

on the whole the decision of the Congress Committee (which was due to meet in August) would not affect his nation and that the rank and file of the Muslim India would obey his mandate and follow the lead given to them by the League. The decision of the League, however, depended upon the shape of things that would crystallise in the wake of the Congress movement; and Jinnah, with his usual cool and thoughtful mind, was watching the situation.

On the morning of the 9th of August 1942, the author was the first to break the news to Mohammad Ali Jinnah that the Congress leaders were rounded up in Bombay and that most of them were already despatched to the destinations of their respective prisons. He received the news with surprise and took away from the author's hand the special edition of a local newspaper which carried it and after enquiring a few details engaged himself in perusing the columns of the paper. Soon after this the disturbances began and news poured into Jinnah's office of various outrages that were committed by Hindus in Bombay. Telephonic enquiries followed from the Musalmans from all over the city when their business premises were surrounded by angry Hindu mobs, asking him what they should do. Jinnah had already made arrangements regarding such contingencies through

the local Muslim League, who handled the situation with great tact and courage.

The Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League met on the 16th of August, although a few of its members were not able to come in time owing to acts of sabotage committed in the way. The Committee considered the situation from every angle and passed a lengthy resolution deploring the Congress decision of August 8, and gave a detailed account of the Congress policy during the last few years. The Committee also criticised the attitude of the British Government for appeasing the Congress "with barren and sterile results," which had "now culminated in the open defiance of law and order." The League Committee reiterated its faith in Pakistan, as the only peaceful solution of India's constitutional problem and made it clear that it stood not only for the freedom of Muslim India but also that of Hindu India. The Working Committee declared once over again that the League was ready and willing to consider any proposals and negotiate with any party for the setting up of a provisional Government on the basis of equality. In these circumstances the Committee called upon the Musalmans to abstain from any participation in the movement initiated by the Congress and to continue to pursue their normal peaceful life, and hoped that "no attempt shall be made from

any quarter to intimidate, coerce, molest or interfere in any manner with the normal life of the Muslims."*

Jinnah's extraordinary political sagacity and wisdom once again proved to be in the best interest of Muslim India soon after the arrest of the Congress leaders. The 'Quit India' movement subsided and beyond a few acts of madness on the part of certain Hindu individuals and misguided youths the situation eased within a few days. If Muslims had joined the Congress movement, beguiled by the slogan of the freedom or independence, Gandhi would have represented to England, America and the world that he alone represented the whole of India and that his demand was also supported by Muslim India. A greater folly and a more serious blunder the Muslims could never have committed if they had fallen into this trap. As a matter of fact, as Jinnah himself said, Gandhi's movement was the gambler's last throw.

The part that the British Government played in arresting the movement in time and nipping the evil in the bud was in a way beneficial to the interest of the Musalmans. The natural course, therefore, should have been that if Muslim India had any belief in the *bona fides* and honesty of the British, the

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*See Appendix VI.

Musalmans would have joined hands with them to crush the Hindu Congress and its movement which was directed against the Musalmans also. But, as Jinnah pointed out, the Muslim India could not trust the British either. They were playing their own game. The Muslim leader, therefore, gave the only lead that was open to him and asked his followers to remain aloof from the movement. " Let them fight it out," declared he. " This is one of those cases where neutrality is the most effective policy on our part." And such was the effect of this lead and so clearly the Musalmans understood it that the Congress movement went without even the slightest support of the Muslims. The Government of India themselves had to admit this fact and exempted the Muslims from the punitive tax that was later levied in certain areas on the saboteurs.

After the arrest of the Congress caucus, those Hindus who still enjoyed the fresh air outside the prison walls began to feel active as usual and initiated the customary move of the demand of the release of the political prisoners. Appeals were issued both to the Government of India and the Government of Britain for help. America, China and Russia were taken into confidence and political manoeuvres once again came in vogue. But the main plank of the Hindu policy—of ignoring the Muslims of India—was not abandoned even by

these individuals who called themselves most liberal and considered themselves outside the much detested pale of communalism. New parties sprang up and unattached leaders were let loose to negotiate a peace between the Congress and British Government. It was once again trying time for the Musalmans. It was feared that the Congress after having seen the aftermaths of its policy might retrace its steps on the plea that it had never started the movement, and the British Government might submit to the Congress demands under the stress of the impending dangers to India from the eastern theatre of war. It was, indeed, the right time for Mohammad Ali Jinnah to assert himself and in November he made this bold and courageous statement: "People ask, supposing the British and the Congress make up their differences and the former yield and surrender to the Congress demand, what will happen to us? The answer is: If the British Government after all their solemn pledges attempt to sacrifice us, let us down and throw us at the mercy of the Congress Raj, believe me, they will not succeed if we are united and organised. Now we are able to stand up and make such a Government impossible. Even the combined forces of China and America cannot impose on us a constitution which will sacrifice Muslim India. But if such a mad blunder is committed by the United Nations, remember even a worm turns, and notwithstanding the foreign bayonets

upholding the Congress Raj, we shall make the administration of the country impossible, for it is far too grave an issue for us to submit to."

This went on. The Congress being behind the bars, Mohammad Ali Jinnah was now left free to pursue his programme of action. About a year before this, when the war situation in India had worsened, he had appointed a League Committee to make an extensive tour of the sub-continent with a view to contacting Musalmans residing in the affected areas as well as others in order to explain to them the League programme of Civil Defence and explore the possibilities of how help could best be rendered to them. Incidentally the League Committee side by side with its work in hand gathered a store of useful information about the various places that it visited. Secondly, in March 1942, Jinnah had issued an appeal for funds and in spite of the difficult system of collection adopted by him had received, within a year, a considerable amount. The main question that engaged his attention now was the improvement of the internal organisation of the League and with this view he concentrated his efforts in the Pakistan areas. In November, he proceeded to the Punjab and made contacts with the Sikh and other non-Muslim leaders of that province and explained to them the implications and beneficial consequences of the Muslim demand of

Pakistan. He made an attempt to reform the Muslim politics of Punjab and to bring the Punjab Muslim League on to a high standard of efficiency. All this, however, was not easy and he had to redouble his endeavours in this direction.

Jinnah's attention was, however, not altogether undivided. The British Government was making an attempt to placate the non-Congress Hindus in order to carry on the functions of the Government of India with their help. The Viceroy and the Secretary of State for India were making statements about the indivisibility of India in order to achieve that end. Some of their speeches went so far as actually to prejudge India's future constitutional position and to militate against the Muslim demand. But, in general, things were satisfactory and Jinnah had plenty of time to proceed with his programme of work. During this period he had good occasions to correct the wrong impression which American and British public had come to acquire through the continued and studied propaganda conducted by Hindus and their agents. A number of foreign correspondents kept in regular touch with him and the entire burden of these corrective measures fell on the shoulders of Jinnah himself. The result was that the smoke screen which the Congress and Hindus had raised in order to prevent others from seeing the justice of Muslim claim of Pakistan



LOUIS FISCHER (American Correspondent) Interviewing M. A. Jinnah

vanished in no time and most of the important elements of foreign public opinion became alive to the real Indian political situation.

During this time Mohammad Ali Jinnah made many a weighty and important pronouncement and practically in all cases disproved the false allegations made against him by his vindictive opponents and also to dispel doubts existing in the minds of others about the Muslim goal of Pakistan. His speech at the plenary session of the All-India Muslim League at Delhi in April, 1943, was perhaps the most important and most weighty. In his presidential address he gave at the outset an account of the position and strength that the Muslim organisation had come to acquire during the past years with special reference to the Muslim majority provinces. His warning to those who thought of using the League for their own interests and selfish motives meant that he had taken to heart the internal organisation of the League. He hoped that the recent happenings in Bengal and other provinces would be sufficient lessons for them. He traced at length the history of the political movement and constitutional advance of India since the year 1861 and the growth of Hindu nationalism that was brought about by the introduction of democratic institutions in India. He outlined how Hindu mind reacted to the decision of the British Government that the people of India would be associated with the

day-to-day administration of the country, and how Muslims, after a few years of working of the reforms, in 1906 demanded the right to separate entity in the form of separate electorates. He briefly traced the course of the events during all these previous years, with which the reader would now be familiar. He explained to his audience as to what the movement started by Gandhi actually was and how it adversely affected the Musalmans. How the narrow-minded attitude of Hindus towards their Muslim countrymen destroyed all possible chances of adjustment between the two great sections of this vast sub-continent of India. Democracy, therefore, could only mean a Hindu Raj in India and could not be suited to the genius of India and Jinnah asked Hindu leardership to "give up this pose."

He made an appeal to Hindu leaders and if they were adamant to Hindu public at large to "stop this internecine war; declare a truce; let us sit as equals and come to a settlement." It was no use saying that the British did not want a settlement and that as long as they remained in India there could be no settlement.* He emphasised the point that the movement started by the Congress was taken by Muslim India to be one against their vital interests and said that the Hindu leadership must call it off. He deplored the tactics adopt-

*Referring to Gandhi's writings.

ed by Hindus for diverting the attention of the world from the real issues by means of false and often contradictory statements. As an illustration he quoted an article of Jawaharlal Nehru sent to America in which he wrote that the introduction of the principle of partitioning India was one of the reasons which led to bitter resentment against the Cripps Proposals and that the Congress could never agree to this. "Was it on the question of veto," asked Mohammad Ali Jinnah, " or was it on the ground of the Defence portfolio, or was it that the All-India Congress would not agree to any idea of Pakistan ? To this country is given one version and to America another."*

Resuming his narrative he traced the causes that underlined the movement of Civil Disobedience by individuals and then that of 'Quit India'. He characterised all these manoeuvres on the part of the Hindus as futile and said that they were conducted against the Muslim demand of Pakistan and to blackmail

*This statement of Nehru will be of special interest to those who are led away by the argument of certain parties engaged perpetually in an attempt to make the Musalmans believe that the Congress in its August resolution had conceded the principle of self-determination. The Muslim point of view that as long as the resolution of Jagat Narain Lal, moved by him at Allahabad in 1942, stands, no importance could be attached to any professions of the Congress leaders regarding their acceptance of the principle of Pakistan. For the Musalmans the Lahore Resolution of the League lays down a very simple proposition, a bare minimum, in which there is no room for a *via media* or formulas.

the British. " I say to the Hindus—and the Britishers know it better than anybody else—that the quickest way for the freedom of the peoples, both Hindus and Muslims, is Pakistan. It may come in my life-time or not, you will remember these words of mine. I say this with no ill-will or offence. Some nations have killed millions of each other. That is not permanent. An enemy of today is a friend of tomorrow. That is life. That is history. So I say this, with a clear conscience. My profound regret is that it is the Congress and its Hindu leadership that are holding up the achievement of freedom of both the Hindus and Musalmans. Our conscience is clear. I appeal to the Hindu public and Hindu leaders: Review, revise your policy." Even the latest offer of Gandhi of inviting Jinnah to form a National Government " subject to such agreed adjustments as may be necessary for the duration of the war, such government being responsible to a duly elected assembly," was nothing more than clouding the issues with vague and ambiguous slogans. It was no use, therefore, for Gandhi and his coterie of men to continue their present policy. The primary duty of the Congress leadership was to declare a truce and retrace their steps. " Nobody would welcome it more than myself," said the Muslim leader, " if Mr. Gandhi is even now really willing to come to a settlement with the Muslim League on the basis of Pakistan. Let me tell you that

it will be the greatest day both for the Hindus and Musalmans. If he has made up his mind, what is there to prevent Mr. Gandhi from writing direct to me? He is writing letters to the Viceroy. Why does he not write to me direct? Who is there that can prevent him from doing so? What is the use of going to the Viceroy and leading deputation and carrying on correspondence? Who is to prevent Mr. Gandhi to-day? I cannot believe for a single moment—strong as this Government may be in this country; you may say anything you like against this Government—I cannot believe that they will have the daring to stop such a letter if it is sent to me. It will be a very serious thing, indeed, if such a thing is done by the Government. But I do not see evidence of any kind of change of policy on the part of Mr. Gandhi or Congress or the Hindu leadership." Explaining further his point, Jinnah said: "Mr. Gandhi gets all the information, all the newspapers and knows and understands what is going on. If there is any change of heart on his part he was only to drop me a few lines, when, I assure you, the Muslim League will not fail, whatever may have been our controversies in the past."

So much for the Congress. Jinnah bitterly criticised also the policy of the British Government towards the League and its act of refusing to grasp the hand of co-operation extended by the Muslims for

the purpose of the successful prosecution of the war. He explained to his audience the constitutional position of Pakistan and the place of minorities in it and cited examples from the world history that supported the Muslim contention. He also examined the various counter-suggestions that were put forward by various organisations and individuals and analysed their various implications making it clear how they failed to meet the Muslim demand. He then referred to the Phoenix-like rise and regeneration of Muslim India from the very ashes of its ruination after the terrible destruction in India in the 18th and 19th centuries. This rise, he said, amounted to a miracle. The people who had lost everything and who were placed by Providence between the upper and nether stones of a mill not only came to their own in a very short time but became, after the British, socially the most solid, militarily the most virile and politically the most decisive factor in modern India. Now it was to take up the constructive programme to build up this nation, so that it could march on the path leading to the goal of Pakistan. It was for the Musalmans to put their heads together and undertake proper and systematic planning.

The conciliatory note that Mohammad Ali Jinnah struck during his speech had unfortunately an adverse effect on Gandhi.

He made it an instrument as a Hindu paper suggested to put Jinnah and the British Government in the wrong. Gandhi wrote to Jinnah saying that he wanted to meet the Muslim leader without signifying his attitude towards " the internecine war " and Muslim goal of Pakistan to which reference was made by Jinnah in his speech. The Government of India, therefore, in accordance with their declared policy of not allowing the prisoners to carry on correspondence with the outside world, withheld the letter but forwarded its substance to Jinnah. When the news of this letter was published there was an uproar from the " nationalist " press. The game was that either the Muslim League and its leader should be embroiled into an unnecessary clash with the Government of India or that the Musalmans should be made to think that their leaders were in an unholy alliance with the British. Both these attempts utterly failed. Mohammad Ali Jinnah cleared the position laid down for such a letter and said that he still hoped that such a communication would not be checked by the Government of India. " Some of the responsible Hindu leaders," said he, " pressed upon me that Mr. Gandhi has now realised that he had made a mistake and that he would be prepared to consider and retrace his steps if he was given an opportunity to do so, and that he had changed his attitude towards Pakistan and would be willing to come to a

settlement on the basis of Pakistan, but the British Government were preventing the Hindu-Muslim settlement by refusing people of position and standing to establish contact with him for this purpose. I, therefore, suggested that if Mr. Gandhi were to write to me a letter indicating that he was prepared to retrace his steps and abandon his policy and programme culminating in the resolution of the A.I.C.C. of August 8, and was even now willing to come to a settlement with the Muslim League on the basis of Pakistan, we were willing to bury the past and forget it. I still believe that the Government will not dare to stop such a letter if it came from Mr. Gandhi."

Interested parties, however, continued to shout that this was Jinnah's afterthought and he wanted to evade the issue. But the original text of Gandhi's letter subsequently published cleared every doubt, as he himself recognised that there was an " if " in Jinnah's speech and that what was required was a change of heart and not change of tactics. But during the intervening period between the news of Gandhi's letter and the publication of its actual text the regular campaign of vilification and vituperation had considerably strengthened the hands of the Congress agents. Some of the Madras Congressmen had, it seems, won over the Khaksar leader, Allama Mashriqi, who happened to be in

Madras at the time, and got him to issue instructions to his followers to adopt every means to "influence" Mohammad Ali Jinnah and make him realise the so-called importance of "oneness." The result was that a fanatic from the Punjab, fired with the enthusiasm of becoming the most faithful follower of the Allama, went to the residence of the Muslim leader and found an occasion to attack him with a knife. The incident is well known and need not be retold here.* But it, nevertheless, demonstrated how misguided and thoughtless propaganda can and does produce undesirable effects. Such incidents abound in the history of the unfortunate political life of this sub-continent. And yet one finds that in India history is seldom made. It often repeats itself.

Unmindful of the trend of events Jinnah's attention was riveted on the Muslim Provinces. His primary aim now was to see that in Muslim areas the authority of the League is maintained and that in the provincial legislatures League parties function properly and systematically. He now resolved that the provincial Governments which had been hitherto functioning under the name of the All-India Muslim League should in

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*A full account of this incident will be found in *Jinnah Faces an Assassin*, by a Bar-at-law.

fact act under the control of the League and be a source of strength to the Muslim organisation instead of serving as mere agents for the good conduct of governmental business, as some of them were tending to be. He wanted to inculcate in them the idea that they should carry on their affairs under a Muslim national policy and bring their respective governments on to a higher standard of public service in pursuance of the nobler cause of public good and public well-being. With this view he started his work in the provinces but while he succeeded considerably in Sind, North-West Frontier Province and Bengal he could not accomplish much in the Punjab, where his efforts have yet to show the desired result and need his concentrated attention. It is, however, beyond doubt that the general effect on the public mind of the Punjab has been more satisfactory than could be imagined.

The sterile policy of the British Government to conduct the affairs of the Government of India with the help of men with little or no public support and the consequent apathy and lack of foresight shown by them in dealing with the acute food problem that was developing for some time past on the one hand and on the other the refusal of the Congress tc devote any attention to the real interest of the people but instead to party gains, based partly on the stupid miscalculation

of the relative strength of the Allies and the Axis, brought about one of the most severe calamities the people of Bengal and adjacent tracts had experienced for a long time. An acute famine in the fertile agricultural land of Bengal connected with a net-work of railways on all sides would seem an unthinkable monstrosity. But that is what exactly happened. On top of this there was the ruthless Banya capitalist, always posing as a " nationalist," who hoarded and held back foodstuffs and cared little for the hundreds of thousands of lives that were being lost in the bargain. Fortunately, at this moment a Muslim League Ministry came in power in Bengal and Lord Wavell assumed the Viceroyalty of India. The Popular support that the League Ministry got from the people of Bengal and Jinnah's valuable endeavours in bringing the various organisations together for the purpose of relief and above all the unprecedented co-operation between the civil and military authorities which was possible through the good offices of Lord Wavell served a great deal to control the situation and Bengal was saved from the impending mass annihilation. The Bengal famine and its relative causes must serve as an eye-opener to the future constitutionalist and to the student of the political problem of India. The manner in which this public calamity of the first magnitude was used by some of India's foremost politicians to ad-

vance their own ends and to further party politics clearly demonstrates the type of texture of which India's "national" life is woven and how far reliance can be placed on a democratic co-operation and good-will of the heterogeneous political elements even when the existence of millions of lives is at stake.

GREATNESS OF MAN APPLAUDED



QAED-E-AZAM being taken in procession at the occasion of the All-India Muslim League annual Session, in Karachi.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE UNCHANGED HEART

The plenary session of the All-India Muslim League was held at Karachi in the month of December of the year 1943. Mohammad Ali Jinnah was now determined in the first place to organise the internal machinery of the League both in the Centre and in the provinces and in the second place to plan the future of Muslim activity within the political field and outside. The appointment of a Committee of Action and also the setting up of a body for the purpose of future planning were steps taken for the realisation of these objects. Muslim India was now entering a new phase. In fact it was now coming into its own. The weight of the Muslim public opinion was slowly making itself felt through the medium of Jinnah's influence. Reforms were needed everywhere and the Muslim intelligentsia was getting impatient for their early introduction, especially in view of the fact that their trusted leader had already taken big strides in that direction.

The Presidential Address delivered by Mohammad Ali Jinnah at Karachi is profusely punctuated by notes of deep pathos showing how much moved he was by the wrong

meaning that were generally attributed to his utterances, and false motives associated with his political actions. For this he had no less complaint against the British than against the Hindus. But he said he must face these allegations with boldness and courage for his conscience was absolutely clear. He, however, made it clear once over again that he bore no ill-will towards any organisation, group or individual. He was advocating a cause in which he thoroughly believed and he was voicing a sentiment which he knew was just and reasonable. His arguments and appeals were, therefore, not only directed to Hindus alone but also to the British, but he was firmly of the opinion that if the former agreed to the principle underlying the Muslim claim, the British authority would be easy to handle in view of the joint effort that would follow. He made no secret of the fact that he hoped such a state of affairs was sooner or later bound to come.

The hopes of Mohammad Ali Jinnah were not altogether unfounded. During the next budget session of the Central Legislative Assembly the Congress Party joined hands with the League in defeating the official *bloc*. The news was welcomed by all. Chaudhry Khaliquzzaman rightly said that "a healthy change in the outlook of Congressmen is taking place and the realities of the situation have begun to be appreciated." The Assembly

incident was hailed by Hindus and Muslims alike as an augury of better understanding and consequently better results, and it was hoped that it might lead to a permanent settlement of a long-standing problem. All eyes were now turned towards the League which had always been eager to coalesce with any party on the basis of equality without prejudice to the major political problem.

It was now for the Government of India to act. Immediately, therefore, in the following month came the unconditional release of Gandhi, and the attention of the Hindu public was once again focussed on Poona where Gandhi stayed. Once again the leaders, who led no one, began to feel active. Once again appeals and messages were addressed to the Whitehall direct. Once again the policy of ignoring Muslim interests and even the existence of the League came into play. Once again requests were made to the India Office that the British Government should "follow Mr. Gandhi's release with a friendly gesture." All this suited the British very well, but the Hindu intelligentsia continued to play into the hands of the detested "imperialists" as usual, and when Mr. Amery refused to have any truck with Gandhi it was again driven to a point of desperation.

The tactics of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi were, however, quite different. After

he had noticed the reaction of Amery to the appeals of the Hindu agents he decided to embark on a "fact finding mission," on the plea that he had been out of touch with politics for a long time and he was not in a position to decide anything definite. But the events that followed, facts about which were brought to light later, throw light upon the actual motive of this mission. It seems that this so-called fact-finding mission was undertaken actually to seek an opportunity by means of which Gandhi would be in a position to negotiate a settlement with the British Government over the head of the Muslim League. He saw, probably, a ray of hope in the ill-advised statements of the Viceroy and the Secretary of State for India and other British statesmen, who had been unduly emphasising their belief in the "essential unity" of India. The first thing that Gandhi did, therefore, perhaps in consonance with his fact-finding mission, was to write to the Viceroy for an interview. The Viceroy, however, could not see his way to grant the interview because of the "radical difference in our points of view." But he was willing to consider "any definite and constructive policy" that Gandhi put forth "on further reflection."

What was now to be done ? Gandhi hit upon a novel idea. A number of jurists were set up to give their legal opinion on the

Congress resolution of August 1942. Soon the expected verdict came that the resolution in question had lapsed ; and this decision was given a wide publicity in India and abroad. Gandhi closely watched the situtation and when he found that this could not also serve his purpose he retraced his steps saying that the August resolution was innocuous and stood as it was, but his authority under the resolution had lapsed.

At this time an English paper sent out to India one of its representatives, Gelder by name, with a view to seeing Gandhi and to providing facilities to the latter for political negotiations. The reader is familiar with a similar incident during the non-co-operation days when the same paper had sent out another representative for the same purpose. But this time, Gelder's mission was more or less unnecessary. This time Gandhi was outside the prison and his release was not without a purpose. On the contrary the exclusive interview that Gandhi granted to Gelder without inviting the Indian journalists, who perpetually kept hovering round Gandhi's quarters, roused a bitter resentment among them. His action, they thought, was very much against his own preachings of *Swadeshi*. In fact a well-known Parsi journalist of Bombay could not find out why Congress leaders should behave in this manner and why there should be "such a big misfire from the biggest gun of them all."

Gelder's interview that was published in India was followed by a studied campaign of propaganda conducted by a score of Hindu learders led by Rajagopalacharia that Gandhi had changed his attitude towards what they called the communal problem. At times it was even stated that the liberal-minded leaders such as Rajagopalacharia and others had triumphed over Gandhi. A formula for the Hindu-Muslim settlement designed by the Madras leader and having the " blessings " of Gandhi was put forth before the public together with the text of the correspondence that passed between the former and Mohammad Ali Jinnah. The Muslim leader in the course of this correspondence had stated that he would put the formula before the League Committee to which the Hindu leader had objected on the ground that it was first to be accepted by Jinnah and then by the League. Rajagopalacharia's statement that accompanied the release of this correspondence to the press was to the effect that Jinnah had no desire for a settlement.

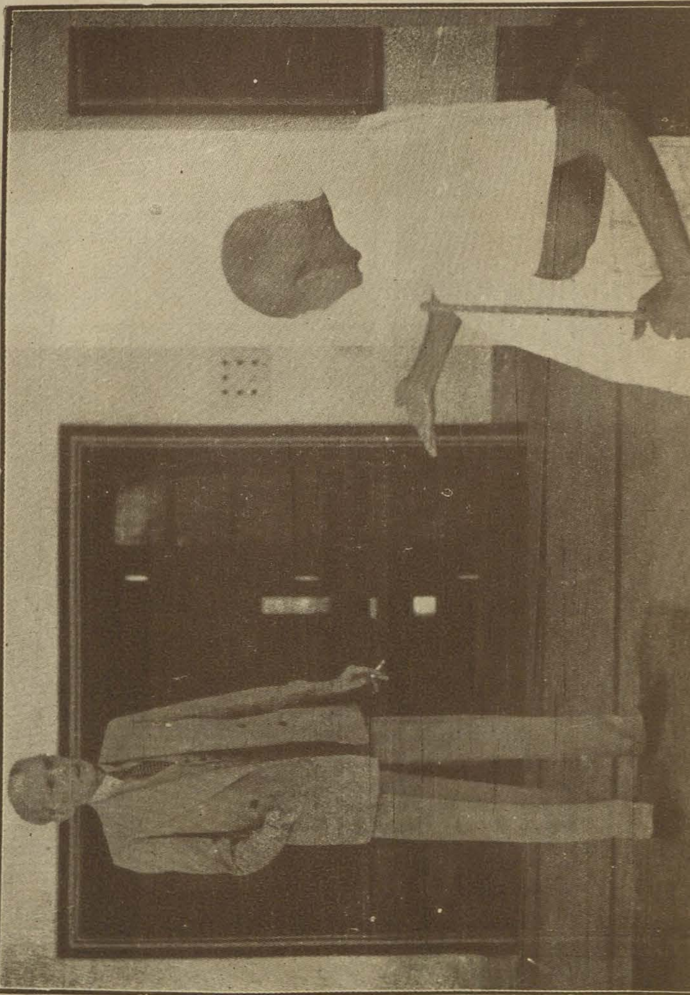
A resume of the circumstances that prompted Rajagopalacharia to publish this correspondence was given by Mohammad Ali Jinnah in the course of his statement before the Council of the All-India Muslim League which met at Delhi at the end of July 1944. Tracing the course of the events as to how attempts of Gandhi to get into touch with the

British authorities failed and coming down to the failure of Gelder " as a go-between to link him up with Lord Wavell," Jinnah proceeded: " At this psychological moment Mr. Rajagopalacharia was at Poona and suddenly I received a telegram from him on June 30, as another go-between, complaining without any reason that his letter of April 8 remained unanswered—although he knew perfectly well that it required no answer, as the answer was already given to him—and threatening me that he would like to publish the formula and my rejection. He said he had sent the telegram with Mr. Gandhi's approval and further warned me that he would like me at this juncture to reconsider my rejection. In my reply I pointed out to him that his version that I had rejected the formula was wrong and I am glad that he does not contradict the true facts as stated by me but confirms them. The correspondence was, however, abruptly released to the press, so that I should stand on my trial before the bar of public opinion of the world and of India and especially of the Musalmans. Immediately the word had passed, and the Congress press framed various grave charges against me.

" My only sin was," said Mohammad Ali Jinnah, " that I requested Mr. Rajagopalacharia to allow me to place his proposal before my Working Committee and that as Mr. Gandhi was no longer in prison I requested

that he should directly communicate to me whatever proposals he may choose to put forward, assuring him that I would place them before my Working Committee. What was the objection to such a course? I fail to appreciate the line adopted by Mr. Gandhi and Mr. Rajagopalacharia and I am willing to face the verdict of the Muslim League or any other independent and impartial men in India or abroad."

Jinnah then proceeded to discuss the details of the Formula and explained at length how in effect it did not meet the Muslim demand. At the close of his statement he disclosed to the House that he had received a letter from Gandhi written in Gujrati together with a translation in Urdu wishing to see him. Jinnah said he had written back to Gandhi in English—"the only language in which I can make no mistake"—signifying his pleasure to receive him at Bombay. The news caused a sensation in the political circles of India and for the time being everything remained in suspense. But the publication of Gandhi-Wavell correspondence, the last link of Gandhi's fact-finding mission, was to a certain extent damping. It demonstrated that even though Gandhi was meeting the Muslim leader for a political settlement his hope in bringing the British round to his point of view has not been shaken. He was obviously persisting in his futile attempt to blackmail the British



against the Muslim interests in spite of protests and objections from the side of Muslim India. The outcome of this meeting, therefore, could be anything but settlement.

The leaders met in the middle of September 1944 and continued their discussion for about a fortnight through personal talk and letters. Both Rajagopalacharia's formula and Lahore Resolution of the League were discussed. Side by side a counter-proposal was also made by Gandhi and ultimately they parted without arriving at any final decision. A study of the letters that passed between Jinnah and Gandhi during these talks reveals that the meeting was more a battle of wits and words than anything else. The Hindu leader insisted that he came in his personal capacity and did not represent any particular point of view than his own. Jinnah on the other hand kept on repeating that he had not accepted that position as a basis for negotiations but was willing to convert Gandhi to his point of view if he were open for conviction. But Jinnah pointed out to Gandhi that even though the latter denied his being " clothed with representative authority " it was strangely clear that " your representative capacity comes into play when you are making counter-proposals," as he had kept on saying that Sikhs and other elements would not agree to the Muslim demands. The stiff attitude of Gandhi and his circuitous argumentation, shifting from

Rajagopalacharia's formula to Lahore Resolution of the League and then back again and then over again to the League Resolution, punctuating the discussions by his own suggestions and those of others whom he did not claim to represent, had made the breakdown of these talks inevitable. Jinnah had called this break unfortunate, and in his final letter anticipated a storm of vituperation, as he himself put it, "to pillory me when the word goes."

The word passed and soon after scores of statements were published in the press, but in the midst of this camouflage the clear outlines of an important fact were discernible—that while Gandhi posed as an individual without having any representative authority vested in him, he had, prior to opening his negotiations with Jinnah, already committed himself to several organisations, not excluding those of the Punjab and Bengal, to the effect that he would never agree to anything without consulting them.

The Hindu public reaction to the Gandhi-Jinnah talks was nothing unusual. The Hindu press continued to support the attitude of Gandhi, while more outspoken elements of Hindu opinion even reproached him for having let down the Hindus by signifying his assent even to the formula of Rajagopalacharia. But the saner opinion was rather

disappointed as to why he made so much fuss about a trifling. If the principle of self-determination was to be accepted, as he professed he did accept it, then why qualify it and beat about the bush until the very essence of it is lost. If a settlement had got to be done on this principle, then why bargain for it and let India's fate hang in the balance? But few could muster courage to raise their voice and things went on as usual. The British had gained their end and the unfortunate deadlock continued as ever. Muslim opinion, however, emerged out stronger and more united than ever before and a considerable number of British statesmen had come to appreciate the Muslim claim.

Gandhi had now once again to focus Hindu opinion on himself and out of the two of his favourite stunts—the fast and the constructive programme—he had, under the advice of his friends, abandoned the first. The opportunity for the second was afforded by the "National Fund" that was being raised by his followers in the name of the late Mrs. Kasturba Gandhi and he set himself the task of utilising it for the "national welfare." How much of this national fund goes to put the Muslims in the wrong and to establish Congress "contact" among them remains yet to be seen, but it is evident that it definitely has a "national" purpose. Yet another national machinery is at work,

set up by Bombay capitalists, who are endeavouring to nationalise Indian industry and above all to nationalise British capital in India. The Musalmans, however, have not failed to see through the game.

At the close of the year 1944 the leaders without any following came once again to the forefront for the purpose which is still engaging their attention—to explore the channels of a compromise. But whether their labours are directed to evolve a formula for Hindu-Muslim settlement, as they have often professed, or for a settlement between the British and Hindus, could only be gauged when their report is out. Meanwhile the recent statement given by Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru to the Cultural Society of Allahabad, emphasising the unity of culture in India, may go a long way to illustrate as to what kind of a decision he and his colleagues are likely to arrive at.

What will be the future of Indian politics is not the object of this book, but events from day-to-day may judge as to what influence they will have on the mind of Mohammad Ali Jinnah and how they will govern his future activity. One of the most important of such events, also of very recent occurrence, is the return to power of the Congress in the Frontier Province, which is supposed to have tacit blessings of Gandhi. What is behind this move? "It is re-

cognised," suggested a Bombay paper, "that the Frontier Province is a special case. The Frontier with an overwhelming Muslim majority has always been handled with extra consideration by the Congress High Command. Much of the Congress claim to represent Muslims as well as Hindus results from its hold on the Frontier Province. It has, therefore, been treated as a pet child." Dr. Khan Sahib, on his assuming the charge of office, is reported to have said that he did so "to alleviate the misery of the people and to eliminate corruption," and when asked to reconcile his position with the 1939 decision of the Congress to withdraw from office, he said: "Don't you see the changes? Are they not before your eyes?" It is generally believed that Gandhi was agreeable in principle to the formation of a Congress Ministry in the Frontier Province. "Serve the people; that is your duty," is believed to have been the advice given by him to Dr. Khan Sahib.

What happened to Gandhi's invitation to the British power to withdraw? Why was that noble sentiment of serving the people lying dormant ever since 1939? Where was that sense of duty? These are the questions that remain to be answered. The times have changed, said Dr. Khan Sahib. The implication, perhaps, is that the war situation has improved; the British victory is no more an uncertainty, the Japanese fate is now sealed

and an attempt to blackmail the British has been utterly foiled. Some other tactics have, therefore, to be adopted. It is, perhaps, more useful "to wreck the constitution from within" or perhaps to make a mass contact from the seat of authority.

There may be any reason advanced for the change of this policy, but to the Musalmans of India it is quite clear that a heart, about which God only knows, remains still unchanged, and that a soul will never get tired of bringing about that change of heart.

APPENDIX I

MEMORANDUM OF THE NINETEEN

The following is the Memorandum which was submitted in October, 1916, to His Excellency the Viceroy by nineteen elected additional members of the Imperial Legislative Council with regard to post-war reforms :

There is no doubt that the termination of the war will see a great advance in the ideals of government all over the civilised world and especially in the British Empire, which entered into the struggle in defence of the liberties of weak and small nationalities and is pouring forth its richest blood and treasure in upholding the cause of justice and humanity in the international relations of the world. India has borne her part in this struggle and cannot remain unaffected by the new spirit of change for a better state of things. Expectations have been raised in this country and hopes held out that, after the war, the problems of Indian administration will be looked at from a new angle of vision. The people of India have good reasons to be grateful to England for the great progress in her material resources and the widening of her intellectual and political outlook under British rule, and for the steady, if slow, advance in her

national life, commencing with the Charter Act of India of 1833. Up to 1909, the Government of India was conducted by a bureaucracy almost entirely non-Indian in its composition and not responsible to the people of India. The reforms of 1909 for the first time introduced an Indian element in the direction of affairs in the administration. of India. This element was of a very limited character. The Indian people accepted it as an indication on the part of the Government of a desire to admit the Indians into the inner counsels of the Indian Empire. So far as the Legislative Councils are concerned, the numbers of non-official members were merely enlarged with increased facilities for debate and interpellation. The Supreme Legislative Council retained an absolute official majority, and in the Provincial Legislative Councils, a non-official majority included nominated members and the European representatives. In measures largely affecting the people, whether of legislation or taxation, by which Europeans were not directly affected, the European members would naturally support the Government and the nominated members, being nominees of the Government, would be inclined to take the same side. Past experience has shown that this has actually happened on various occasions. The non-official majorities, therefore, in the Provincial Councils have proved largely illusory and give no real power to the representatives of the

people. The Legislative Councils, whether Supreme or Provincial, are at present nothing but advisory bodies, without any power of effective control over the Government, Imperial or Provincial. The people or their representatives are practically as little associated with the real government of the country as they were before the reforms except for the introduction of the Indian element in the Executive Council, where again the nomination rests entirely with the Government, the people having no voice in the selection of the Indian members.

DISABILITIES

The object which the Government had in view in introducing the reforms of 1909 was, as expressed by the Prime Minister in his speech in the House of Commons on the second reading of the Indian Councils Bill (1st April, 1909), that "it was most desirable in the circumstances to give to the people of India the feeling that these Legislative Councils are not mere automatons, the wires of which are pulled by the official hierarchy." This object, it is submitted, has not been attained. Apart from this question of the constitution of the Legislative and Executive Councils, the people labour under certain grave disabilities, which not only prevent the utilisation, but also lead to the wastage, of what is best in them, and are positively derogatory to their

sense of national self-respect. The Arms Act, which excludes from its operations Europeans and Anglo-Indians and applies only to the pure native of the country, the disqualification of Indians for forming or joining Volunteer corps, and their exclusion from the Commissioned ranks of the army, are disabilities which are looked upon with an irritating sense of racial differentiation. It would be bad enough if these were mere disabilities. Restrictions and prohibitions regarding the possession and use of arms have tended to emasculate the civil population in India and expose them to serious danger. The position of Indians in India is practically this, that they have no real part or share in the direction of the government of the country, and are placed under very great and galling disabilities.

The existence, moreover, of the system of indentured emigration gives to the British Colonies and the outside world the impression that Indians, as a whole, are no better than indentured coolies, who are looked upon as very little, if at all, above the slave. The present state of things makes the Indians feel that, though theoretically they are the equal subjects of the King, they hold a very inferior position in the British Empire. Other Asiatic races also hold the same, if not a worse, view about India and her status in the Empire. Humiliating as this position of inferiority is to the Indian mind, it is almost unbearable to the

youth of India, whose outlook is broadened by education and travel in foreign parts where they come in contact with the other free races. In the face of these grievances and disabilities, what has sustained the people is the hope and faith inspired by promises and assurances of fair and equal treatment which have been held out from time to time by our Sovereigns and British statesmen of high standing.

NOT A REWARD

In the crisis we are now going through, the Indian people have sunk domestic differences between themselves and the Government and have faithfully and loyally stood by the Empire. The Indian soldiers were eager to go to the battlefields of Europe, not as mercenary troops but as free citizens of the British Empire which required their services, and her civilian population was animated by one desire, namely, to stand by England in the hour of her need. Peace and tranquillity reigned throughout India when she was practically denuded of British and Indian troops. The Prime Minister of England, while voicing the sentiments of the English people in regard to India's part in this great war, spoke of Indians as "the joint and equal custodians of one common interest and future." India does not claim any reward for her loyalty, but she has a right to expect that the want of confidence on the part of Govern-

ment, to which she not unnaturally ascribes her present state, should now be a thing of the past and that she should no longer occupy a position of subordination but one of comradeship. This would assure the Indian people that England is ready and willing to help them to attain self-government under the aegis of the British Crown, and thus discharge the noble mission which she has undertaken and to which she has so often given voluntary expression through her rulers and statesmen. What is wanted is not merely good government or efficient administration, but government that is acceptable to the people because it is responsible to them. This is what, India understands, would constitute the changed angle of vision.

If, after the termination of the war, the position of India practically remains what it was before and there is no material change in it, it will undoubtedly cause bitter disappointment and great discontent in the country, and the beneficent effects of participation in common danger, overcome by common effort, will soon disappear, leaving no record behind save the painful memory of unrealised expectations. We feel sure that the Government is also alive to the situation and is contemplating measures of reform in the administration of the country. We feel that we should avail ourselves of this opportunity to respectfully offer to the Government our humble sugges-

tions as to the lines on which these reforms should proceed. They must, in our opinion, go to the root of the matter. They must give to the people real and effective participation in the government of the country, and also remove these irritating disabilities as regards the possession of arms and military career, which indicates want of confidence in the people and place them in a position of inferiority and helplessness. With this view, we would take the liberty to suggest the following measures for consideration and adoption :—

1. In all the Executive Councils, Provincial and Imperial, half the number of members should be Indians ; the European element in the Executive Councils should, as far as possible, be nominated from the ranks of men trained and educated in public life of England, so that India may have the benefit of a wider outlook and larger experience of the outside world. It is not absolutely essential that the members of the Executive Councils, Indians or Europeans, should have experience of actual administration, for, as in the case of ministers in England, the assistance of the permanent officials of the departments is always available to them. As regards Indians we venture to say that a sufficient number of qualified Indians, who can worthily fill the office of members of the Executive Council and hold portfolios is available. Our short

experience in this direction has shown how Indians like Sir S. P. Sinha, Sir Syed Ali Imam, the late Mr. Krishnaswami Iyer, Sir Shams-ul-Huda and Sir Sankaran Nair have maintained a high level of administrative ability in the discharge of their duties. Moreover, it is well known that the Native States, where Indians have opportunities, have produced renowned administrators like Sir Salar Jang, Sir T. Madhava Rao, Sir Seshadri Aiyer, Dewan Bahadur Raghunath Rao, not to mention the present administrators in the various Native States of India. The statutory obligations, now existing, that three of the members of the Supreme Executive Council shall be elected from the Public Services in India and similar provisions with regard to Provincial Councils should be removed. The elected representatives of the people should have a voice in the selection of the Indian members of the Executive Council and for that purpose a principle of election should be adopted.

2. All the Legislative Councils in India should have a substantial majority of elected representatives. These representatives, we feel sure, will watch and safeguard the interests of the masses and the agricultural population with whom they are in closer touch than any European officer, however sympathetic, can possibly be. The proceedings of the various Legislative Councils and the Indian National

Congress and the Muslim League bear ample testimony to the solicitude of the educated Indians for the welfare of the masses and their acquaintance with their wants and wishes. The franchise should be broadened and extended directly to the people, Muslims or Hindus, wherever they are in a minority, being given proper and adequate representation having regard to their numercial strength and position.

3. The total number of the members of the Supreme Council should not be less than 150, and of the Provincial Council not less than 100 for the major provinces, and not less than sixty to seventy-five for the minor provinces.

4. The Budget should be passed in the shape of money bills, fiscal autonomy being conceded to India.

5. The Imperial Legislative Council should have power to legislate on, and discuss and pass resolutions relating to, all matters of Indian administration, and the Provincial Councils should have similar powers with regard to Provincial administrations, save and except that the direction of military affairs, of foreign relations, declarations of war, the making of peace, and the entering into treaties, other than commercial, should be vested in the Government of India. As a safeguard

the Governor-General-in-Council or the Governor-in-Council, as the case may be, should have the right of veto which, however, should be exercised subject to certain conditions and limitations.

6. The Council of the Secretary of State should be abolished. The Secretary of State should, as far as possible, hold in relation to the Government of India a position similar to that which the Secretary of State for the Colonies holds in relation to the Colonies. The Secretary of State should be assisted by two permanent Under-Secretaries, one of whom should be an Indian. The salaries of the Secretary and Under-Secretaries should be placed on the British estimates.

7. In any scheme of Indian Federation, India should be given through her chosen representatives a place similar to that of the self-governing Dominions.

8. The Provincial Governments should be made autonomous, as stated in the Government of India's Despatch dated the 5th August 1911.

9. The United Provinces, as well as the other majority provinces, should have a Governor brought from the United Kingdom and should have an Executive Council.

10. A full measure of local self-government should be immediately granted.

11. The right to carry arms should be granted to Indians on the same conditions as to Europeans.

12. Indians should be allowed to enlist as volunteers and units of a territorial army established in India.

13. Commissions in the army should be given to Indian youths under conditions similar to those applicable to Europeans.

APPENDIX II

BOMBAY PROVINCIAL CONFERENCE 1916

In presiding over the sixteenth Bombay Provincial Conference held at Ahmedabad in October 1916, the Hon'ble Mr. M. A. Jinnah delivered the following Address :

Brother Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I need hardly say that, in calling me to preside over the deliberations of the 16th Bombay Provincial Conference, you have conferred upon me the greatest honour that is within the gift of the people of this Presidency. I do not know why your choice has fallen upon me, but when the call came, I considered it my duty as a servant of the cause, to obey it, and I am here to-day amongst you. I most sincerely thank you for the honourable position to which you have raised me to-day and I shall try to do my duty as a President and I have no doubt that I shall have your entire support and co-operation in carrying out those duties during our deliberations.

This is the first time after many years since the unfortunate differences arose in Surat, that the United Provincial Conference

has met and the responsibility—the peculiar responsibility—therefore, rests on me and all of you correctly to voice the public opinion of the country and the Presidency.

Since the last meeting of the Provincial Conference at Poona we have—nay, the Empire has—lost one of its greatest soldiers, Lord Kitchener, and in Sir Pherozshah Mehta one of its greatest politicians and statesmen.

We deeply mourn the great loss of such men especially at this juncture of stress and great crisis through which India and the whole Empire is passing.

In Sir Chimunbhai Madhavlal, to our great sorrow, we have lost a captain of Industry and Commerce for which Ahmedabad is so famous. He was a great philanthropist and patron of learning and education.

In Mr. Daji Abaji Khare, I say with the deepest sorrow, we have lost a man of sturdy independence and a quiet but devoted worker for the cause of India. He rendered great, continuous, valuable services to the Indian National Congress from its early days of storm and difficulties.

In Mr. Govindrao Appaji Patel, I regret to say we have lost a zealous and devoted worker in the public cause in the

Province of Gujarat. May the soul of these great and devoted men who worked for the Empire and public cause rest in peace. And let us pray that we may soon have other such servants who may take their places and keep up their great traditions, and follow their noble examples and maintain the prestige and a great name of this mighty Empire.

INDIA'S SERVICES

Two questions above all are uppermost in our thoughts and are engrossing our minds at the present moment. The war and what is going to happen after the successful termination of this titanic struggle that has overshadowed the entire civilised world. India has stood faithful and loyal to the British Empire from the very commencement ; she has poured out her treasure and shed the blood of some of her noblest sons on the battlefields of Flanders, Africa, Egypt and Mesopotamia for the defence of the Empire. It may be said once for all that the people of India are proud to be a part of the British Empire and that their loyalty is as true and firm as that of any other Britisher in any part of the Empire, not excluding Great Britain and there is no doubt that India will to the end stand faithfully by the British Empire. But she wishes no longer to continue as the subject race, or, to put in the

words of Lord Hardinge, "the trusty dependent", but claims to be an equal partner with the other members of the Empire.

It is a matter of great rejoicing that the enemy has failed in his efforts at Verdun. The gallant and noble defence of Verdun by the French people has won the admiration of the world: with this signal failure on the part of the enemy, the advent of Roumania and the mighty army that England has raised with ample munition, has enabled the Allies successfully to take the offensive in the West. The initiative is no longer with the enemy and the tide has turned, and let us hope that it will not be long before the arms of the Allies are finally successful, and this great war ends in complete defeat of the brutal and aggressive Prussian militarism.

We have met here to-day to consider the position of our country and Province. There are many questions and problems which require our most earnest and serious consideration. We have met to discuss those questions and exchange our views regarding those problems. Naturally on taking a general survey of the situation, one has to face the questions—What progress have we made within the past half a century? What is our present position? What is to be our future? What steps should be

taken to remove the difficulties in our way? What measures should be adopted to further the progress of our country and to attain as soon as possible our most cherished goals, namely, Self-Government under the "aegis" of the British Crown and the Provincial Autonomy foreshadowed in the Delhi Despatch of Government of India dated the 25th August, 1911? It is said that there is peace and security in the country. It is said that there is prosperity in the country, although two of the greatest sons of India—Mr. Dadabhoy Naoroji and Mr. Romesh Chandra Dutt—the latter with his great administrative experience of India—do not agree with the statement that there is real prosperity in the country; it is said that the administration of the country is most efficient and the Collectors and the Commissioners are devoted to their duties and to the Districts where they work and that they have the interests and the welfare of the ryots at their heart; it is said that the British soldiers and British navy are protecting our lives and property, our hearths and homes are quite secure and safe. It is said that all is going well—everything is managed properly on behalf of the people by the Civil Service. Assuming all this to be correct and granting that there is peace, prosperity and efficient administration entirely in the hands of the Civil Servants, is that any reason that the control, the management and the administration of the affairs of our

country should for ever be continued as a monopoly in the hand of a bureaucratic Government? Is it any argument to say that since the bureaucracy have under certain conditions managed the affairs of the country well for half a century and more, that, therefore, they should be given a permanent monopoly—no matter what the changed conditions are and how much those conditions may have altered? Is that any reason why the Commissioned ranks in the Military and Naval services should be closed to the sons of India? Is that any reason for denying to India the right to join the Volunteer Corps and for continuing the application of the Arms Act?

PARLIAMENT AND INDIA

The first question that arises is, whether this system of administration conducted by the Civil Servants, who are neither under the control of or responsible to the people who pay their salaries, can any longer continue. It is said that they are responsible to the Secretary of State for India and that the Secretary of State for India in his turn is responsible to Parliament. I will only quote from one of the leading journals in England, the "Manchester Guardian," what appeared in its columns recently with regard to the responsibility of Parliament in matters affecting India:

"A new Viceroy and a new Secretary of State are in office. From the date of Lord Morley's translation seven years ago to that of Mr. Austen Chamberlain's acceptance of the India Office last summer, Indian questions in the Commons have been dealt with by the Under-Secretary; and it is surely an anomaly and sometimes of a scandal that not once since his appointment has the House had an opportunity of hearing from Mr. Chamberlain a full statement upon the condition of India or an exposition of his policy. And yet as the whole Empire realises, the position of India in the Imperial system is deeply affected by the movement of events as it will be by every measure of after-war policy that may be decided by England and her Allies. Moreover, the internal life of India today is undergoing changes more rapid than any hitherto known and the Government by deciding upon the publication of the Royal Commission's Report on the Public Services, has acknowledged the wisdom and necessity of discussion upon proposals for administrative reform. It is high time that Parliament began to take the affairs of India seriously and that the official myth that India wants nothing but to be let alone were exploded. If Parliament is to ignore the vast responsibility of the government of this mighty dependency, what is the use of a Parliament which calls itself Imperial?"

Ladies and gentlemen, is it not an anomaly that the domestic affairs of a country with a population of three hundred millions and more should practically be under the

control and the management of (as it is often said by ministers and writers) an alien bureaucracy, not responsible to the people of the country, under no control of the people who pay taxation, but only accountable to the Secretary of State for India, who himself has never been to India, and his Council, which again is composed mostly of retired Civil Servants, sitting seven thousand miles away from India; and the Secretary of State again in his turn theoretically responsible to Parliament for his stewardship, though in practice hardly ever is his stewardship called to account or critically investigated by Parliament? Lord Courtney deprecated the position of the Secretary of State for India in the following words:

> "The Secretary of State is a member of the Cabinet, which must possess the confidence of the House of Commons. In the end, the national will must have its way here as elsewhere; but checks and obstacles are interposed which, perhaps, insensibly moderates its force. No part of the expense involved in the Government of India comes before the House of Commons in Committee Supply. The salary of the Colonial Secretary is voted by Parliament and there is thus a possibility of annually reviewing his policy in the full activity of the Parliamentary sessions. The salary of the Secretary of State for India is paid by India and never comes before the House of Commons. At the end of the session, generally after the Appropriation Bill is

read a second time, the Indian Budget is submitted; and this consists of the review of the financial situation in India, followed by, after a desultory discussion, a resolution simply affirming that the Indian accounts show certain totals of Income and Expenditure, it may be doubted whether this does not betray too great a jealousy of the House of Commons. If the salary of the India's Secretary of State were submitted like the Colonial Secretary's to a vote, the opportunity for a real debate would be given, which, experience suggests, would be used rather than abused."

But I go further: Is it possible or natural as a rule for members of Parliament to grasp or grapple with questions affecting the internal administration and progress of India? When it was found that that was not possible in the case of Australia, Canada and South Africa, with few millions of population, would it not be miraculous if they continued to manage successfully the affairs of India by Parliament sitting in London? Having regard to the rapidly growing wants and demands of the people and the tremendous progress and changes that India is going through every few years, is it possible to govern India from Whitehall or Downing Street? To those who know India and understand India, it is clear that she no longer will merely obey, but wants to manage her own affairs. Peace, prosperity and security which satisfied her a decade ago are no longer enough. The soul of young

India has been roused and it yearns for political freedom. However well our physical and material wants may be provided for, that is not sufficient, India wants to raise herself to a status which will command the respect of the nations of the world for her and which will be befitting her national honour and self-respect. It is not now a question of a few posts; it is no longer a question of a few grievances or reform of internal matters of administration; it is a question of complete change of policy. The question at issue is not merely one of details, but it relates to the fundamental structure of the Government and we require a statesman to deal with the present situation and refashion and reconstruct the constitution of the Government of India. It is said that there is dissatisfaction in the country; it is said that a political agitation is kept up which is embarrassing to the Government; it is said that the Home Rule League movement is not desirable; but what is the cause of it all? Surely, those are not merely the signs of an excessive imagination as explained by some people for want of better knowledge. It is quite clear that this is due to the awakened political consciousness of the people, who demand a new policy and resent, and rightly resent, the differential treatment which is meted out to them socially, commercially and politically. It is a mistake to construe this resentment as a mark of disloyalty. It will be wisdom to root out the fundamental causes of dissatisfaction and discontent.

NEW SPIRIT

A new spirit is abroad. It is young India, who, to put it in the words of Lord Morley, "leave our universities intoxicated with the ideas of freedom, nationality and self-government," have to be satisfied It will be cold comfort to them to say that free institutions are the special privilege of the West. In order to meet the present situation, in my humble opinion, the members of the Indian Civil Service must now realise that, as the Government of India from autocracy was transferred to bureaucracy, so the time has come when from bureaucracy it must tend towards democracy. They have wielded the sceptre of supreme control for a long time and their dominion in India has not been without its benefits to the country. But the time has come, when, however unwilling—and naturally unwilling—they must part with their supreme control and dominion. Amongst the many benefits that have been conferred upon India by British Rule, perhaps the greatest of boons, albeit, an indirect one which India has received at the hands of the English people, has been the birth of a genuine spirit of patriotism. To put it in the words of a member of the Civil Service, who has given much thought to the problem of bureaucratic Government: "It is the patriotism which seeks its ideals, not in military glory or the apotheosis of a king, but in the advancement

of the people. Informed by this spirit and strong in the material benefits flowing from British Rule, India now knocks at the portal of democracy; bureaucracy has served its purpose. Though the Indian Civil Service were manned by angels from heaven, the incurable defects of bureaucratic Government must pervert their best intentions and make them foes of political progress. It must now stand aside and in the interest of the country it has served so long and so truly, make over the dominion to other hands not in dishonour but in honour, proudly as shipbuilders who deliver the seamen the completed ship, may they now yield up the direction of India." This will require self-abnegation, self-sacrifice—not for their own nation but for India, for humanity. It will require sympathy and understanding such as no nation has ever felt for a foreign people. Will the Civil Service rise to this supreme duty they owe to the three hundred millions of people of this country? Let me quote the words of His Excellency Lord Hardinge from his speech at the United Service Club which he addressed to a large number of representative officials. He said:

> "England has instilled into this country the culture and civilisation of the West with all its ideals of liberty and self-respect. It is not enough for her now to consider only the material outlook of India. It is necessary for her to cherish the aspirations of which she has herself sown the seed

> and English officials are gradually awakening to the fact that high as were the aims and remarkable the achievements of their predecessors, a still nobler task lies before them in the present and the future, guiding the uncertain and faltering steps of Indian development along sure and safe paths. The new role of guide, philosopher and friend is opening before you and it is worthy of your greatest efforts. It requires in you gifts of imagination and sympathy and imposes upon you self-sacrifice, for it means that slowly, but surely you must divest yourselves of some of the powers you have hitherto wielded."

It is universally recognised that if you deprive a nation of all share in its own government, in the forging of its destiny, you emasculate its energies, undermine its character and sear, as if with a hot iron, its self-respect. In the sphere of intellect such a government spells not progress, but decay.

PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

This now brings me to the question as to what should be done. This being a Provincial Conference, I will now confine myself only to the Provincial Government. The first principle that is to be observed is the principle of devolution and decentralisation. But this, as I understand, implies that the ultimate control of the Imperial authority in Legislative as well as in Executive matters, is

kept intact and in reserve to be used whenever necessary. And a better illustration of this principle cannot be found than in the Home Rule Bill which was passed by the House of Commons conferring self-Government on Ireland. Prof. Morgan in an authoritative exposition of the New Irish Constitution points out that " the Bill is quite outside the category of Federalism in that, while it proposes a delegation of authority both in the Legislative and Executive, there is none of the distribution of Sovereignty which is a distinguishing characteristic of a Federation. The Executive power in Ireland will continue vested in His Majesty. The Legislative authority will be subject to an Imperial veto and to the supremacy of the Imperial Parliament with its powers of concurrent Legislation and the Irish courts will be subject to the Appellate Jurisdiction of an Imperial Court." In other words the Imperial power will be supreme in the Executive, the Legislative and the Judicial sphere. The position of the Executive and Legislative authorities in India is quite similar and although the element of self-government in every one of them is more or less non-existent, the legal relation between the Imperial and Provincial Governments is based on the same principle.

The Provincial Council is supposed to have a non-official majority. The non-official representatives are divided into elected mem-

bers, nominated members, that is to say, nominated by Government and European representatives. In measures affecting the people in which Europeans are not directly concerned, they support the Government. Nominated members, being nominees of Government, are naturally inclined to take the side of Government. Past experience has shown that this has actually happened on various occasions. The non-official majority, therefore, in the Provincial Council is illusory and gives no real power to the representatives of the people. The Provincial Council at the present moment is nothing but an advisory body without possessing any power or effective control over the Government. The people or their representatives are as little associated with the real Government of the Province as they were before the Reforms of 1909 except for the introduction of one Indian member in the Executive Council of His Excellency the Governor, where again the nomination rests entirely with the Government, the people having no voice in the selection of the Indian member. The object, which the Government had in view in introducing the Reforms of 1909, as expressed by the Prime Minister in his speech in the House of Commons on the second reading of the India Council Bill, (April 1st, 1909), "that it was desirable in the circumstances to give to people of India a feeling that these Legislative Councils are not mere automatons, the wires

of which are pulled by the official hierarchy," it is quite clear, has not been attained.

FORM OF ADMINISTRATION

In order to give the people of the Province the real and effective voice in the Government of the Province for which they are ripe, the following brief outline may be indicated as to the form of administration that should be set up in our Province :

1. The Province should have a Governor appointed from England at the head of the administration.

2. A Cabinet or Executive Council of six members, three of whom should be Indians, with the following portfolios :

(*a*) Provincial (including Law and Justice similar to Home Member).

(*b*) Finance.

(*c*) Agriculture, Irrigation and Public Works.

(*d*) Education.

(*e*) Local Self-Government (including Sanitation and Medical Relief).

(*f*) Industries and Commerce.

While members of the Indian Civil Service should still be eligible for appointment to the Executive Council, no places in the Council should be reserved for them as at present under the Statute, which makes it obligatory that a certain number of the members of the Executive Council should be appointed from the Public Services.

The best men available should be appointed, whether English or Indian.

3. A substantial majority in the Council should be of elected members returned by different constituencies and interests. Muslims and Hindus, wherever they are in a minority, should have proper, adequate and effective representation, having regard to their numerical strength and position. There should be no nominated non-official members except as experts.

4. The Council should have the power to pass all provincial legislation and determine Provincial taxation. All resolutions in connection with the budget as also on questions of general administration should take effect unless vetoed by the Governor. More frequent meetings, and longer continuous sittings will also have to be provided for. But the members of Executive Council shall not depend individually or collectively on the support of the majority of the Council or for

holding their offices. The Provincial Government, reconstituted and working under the control of the Legislative Council, should have complete charge of the internal administration of the province. It should have independent financial powers and the present financial relationship between the Provincial Government and the Government of India should be largely revised or, if necessary, reversed. The Provincial Government should be required to make an annual contribution to the Government of India, fixed for a definite period. Subject to this arrangement the Imperial and Provincial Governments should develop their separate systems of finance, the Provincial Government being given powers of taxation and borrowing within certain limits.

No scheme of provincial autonomy can be complete without the corresponding changes of a liberalising character being introduced into the District and Municipal administration.

It is always a difficult task to lay down any cut and dried scheme in a presidential address, but here again I shall venture to make a few suggestions affecting the fundamental principles that underlie local self-government in India and here I would quote from no less an authority than Lord Morley's Reform Despatch dated the 27th November, 1909. It says: "The principles that should inspire and regulate measures with this aim, can hardly be

laid down on sounder and clearer terms than in the Resolution published by the Government of India on the 18th of May 1882. I do not know where to look for a better expression of the views that should govern our policy under this important head."

This resolution although passed as far back as 1882 by the Government of that renowned Viceroy, Lord Ripon, has not still been carried out fully or given real effect to.

The first and foremost change that is necessary to be introduced in the various bodies, is that they should be wholly elected, the Provincial Government alone reserving to itself and exercising powers of control; that the present official control exercised by the Collectors and Commissioners should be removed; that the Chairman should be elected by the Boards and the *ex officio* President should be done away with; that a portion of Excise revenue or some other definite source of revenue should be made over to these Bodies so that they may have adequate resources at their disposal for the due performance of their duties.

To quote again from Lord Morley's Reform Despatch, this is what he says:

"I will venture to quote some passages in this memorable deliverance. Explaining the proposal for Local Self-Government of that date the Government of India place themselves on ground which may well be our ground also. It is not primarily, they say, 'with a view to improvement in administration that this measure is put forward and supported, it is chiefly desirable as an instrument of political and popular education,' and again, 'there appears to be great force in the argument that so long as the chief Executive officers are, as a matter of course, Chairmen of the Municipal and District Committees, there is little chance of these committees affording any effective training to their members taking any real interest in local business. The non-official members must be led to feel that real power is placed in their hands and that they have real responsibilities to discharge.' This anticipation has been, to some extent, warranted by experience. Funds have not existed for an efficient Executive staff. The official element within the Local Bodies has been in many places predominant. Non-official members have not been induced to such an extent as was hoped, to take a real interest in Local business, because their powers and their responsibilities were not real. If Local Self-Government has so far been no marked success as a training ground, it is mainly for the reason that the constitution of the Local Bodies departed from what was affirmed in the Resolution to be 'the true principle' that 'the control should be exercised from without rather than from within; the Government should revise and check the acts of Local Bodies but not dictate them.'

> I have no doubt that the Government of India to-day will affirm and actively shape their policy upon the principle authoritatively set forth by their predecessors in 1882: 'It would be hopeless to expect any real development of self-government if the Local Bodies were subject to check and interference in matters of detail, and the respective powers of Government and of the various Local Bodies should be clearly and distinctly defined by Statute so that there may be as little risk of friction and misunderstanding as possible within the limits to be laid down in each case. However the Governor-General-in-Council is anxious that the fullest possible liberty of action should be given to Local Bodies.'"

ARMS ACT

I have made a few general observations and dealt with the Provincial Government and the question of Local Self-Government. There are many other questions and important questions which I see are placed on the agenda in the form of Resolutions and I have no doubt that the speakers in charge of those Resolutions will adequately deal with them. But I cannot conclude my address without referring at least to some of the burning questions, and amongst them the most important question is the question of admission of the Indians to Commissioned ranks of the Army and Navy, the removal of the most irritating and humiliating disabilities created by statutes which have raised a bar

against the people of India in joining Volunteer Corps, no matter what their rank or position in life may be ; the unjust application of the Arms Act to the people of India from which the Europeans are exempted. The Press Act and its arbitrary provisions and still more its arbitrary enforcement by the Executive which is subject to no judicial check, so far as the decisions of the High Courts at the present moment go ; the Defence of India Act, which was purely a War measure and to which the representatives of the people of India assented when it came before the Imperial Council, is worked in a manner in some cases which is highly undesirable ; the undue and unjustifiable delay in making elementary education free and compulsory in the selected areas is the cause of the greatest dissatisfaction and disappointment to the people.

INDIANS AND THE ARMY AND NAVY

Now to take the question of the Army and the Navy, the only two arguments which have hitherto been advanced are that the people of the country are not fit except some sects or tribes who have followed the profession of arms as a hereditary profession. Now, first of all, is that a correct hypothesis ? At the outbreak of the war, the princes and the people of India of all classes and sections, with one voice, volunteered to support the Empire with their money and blood. Young

students in England belonging to different classes of poeple in India, from all parts of India studying at their Universities, volunteered to enlist themselves as Territorials. For an answer, they were told that being Indians, their services could not be accepted. Then they made representations to the Secretary of State for India expressing their indignation at this differential treatment, it was said that the whole military question affecting India will be considered after the war. In Bengal a movement was started in which Sir S. P. Sinha took a leading part to start a Volunteer Corps, a large sum of money was collected and six hundred young men belonging to respectable families enlisted themselves ready to go to the front, to fight the battle of Empire. But they were told that that cannot be. Does the profession of a soldier require more brains, greater capacity, ingenuity than that of a lawyer, a doctor or a poet or a scientist? If Indians are good enough to fight as sepoys and privates, why are they not good enough to occupy the position of officers? There cannot be a better answer than what the Indian soldiers have achieved in this war. Several of them are the proud possessors of the Victoria Cross, which, to a soldier, is the greatest honour and decoration that can be conferred upon him by the King-Emperor.

The second argument is that an army with a preponderance of the Indian element

may be turned against the British Government and here I cannot but quote a more complete answer than what was given by the President of the Indian National Congress, Sir S. P. Sinha. He said: "I venture to submit in reply that anarchists and seditionists may succeed in winning over an ignorant and mercenary army, but they will never succeed in winning over a truly national army, drawn from a people made increasingly loyal by the spread of education and liberal self-governing institutions. The opening of a military career will fire the imagination and stimulate the virility of India in a way that nothing else can do. And is it too much for India to expect to be treated in the same way as Russia treats her subject races—especially after the proof India has given of the prowess of her sons and their devotion and loyalty to the Imperial Standard?"

These arguments equally apply to the Navy, where the sons of India cannot aspire to a higher position than that of Lascar in the Mercantile Marine. The time is not far distant when perhaps India will have to consider what fleet she should raise primarily for Indian defences and as a contribution to the Imperial Navy.

The Press Act was a most unwelcome measure from its very inception. It has been characterised as a serious menace to the free-

dom of the Press in India; but the harsh manner in which it is enforced has roused the strongest opposition and created great discontent. The safeguards provided by the Act have proved illusory and incapable of being enforced as declared by the High Court of Calcutta. It is high time that the Government appointed a Committee of official and non-official members to consider its working since 1910 and recommend what course should be adopted to allay the just public resentment and discontent with regard to this measure.

DEFENCE OF INDIA ACT

The Defence of India Act as a War measure was accepted by the country. But its working has proved that it is a dangerous weapon placed in the hands of the Executive on whom there is no judicial check of any kind whatsoever. It would be wise to follow the procedure adopted in England to have a Committee who should have the power of revising the orders of the Executive Officers and such a Committee should have an equal number of Indian members.

I have the honour and privilege of knowing His Excellency the Governor. If I may say so, Lord Willingdon is all kindness and courtesy. I hope, I am not giving out any secrets when I say that I personally know that he is in full sympathy with our ideals and

aspirations and has done much to support them. But I cannot help saying that it was a matter of profound regret that the Bombay Government of which he is the head, should have thought proper to apply the Defence of India Act to that great English lady, Mrs. Besant. Whether we agree with her or not, whether we see eye to eye with her or not on certain questions, I believe I am expressing the universal feeling of this Presidency and, for the matter of that, the whole country at large, that the order of the local Government prohibiting Mrs. Besant to enter our Province was received with the utmost sorrow and shock. It is a grave reflection on the fair name of this Presidency and I feel it is calculated to do great harm to the dignity and the prestige of the Government itself.

With regard to elementary education being made free and compulsory, so much has been said that at this juncture I do not wish to enter into details; but the renaissance of India can only be achieved truly by a true and real foundation to be laid for self-government ultimately based on a proper system of education of national character, which in course of time would produce more and more men worthy of managing the affairs of our own country. I may have occasion at a not very distant future, when I should perhaps like to deal with this important question in detail.

THE EDUCATED CLASSES

Before I leave this subject, I may point out that it is often put forward as a favourite argument that India is not fit for self-government because the educated classes are as yet a very small fraction in the country. In the first instance the Government, although they have recently bestirred themselves in the cause of education, have never seriously and earnestly grappled with the problem of Elementary or Primary education in India. The question has always been shelved on one ground or the other, such as want of funds, want of school buildings, want of trained teachers. On the other hand, we are told that we have not got a sufficient number of educated people. Who is responsible for it after one hundred years of British Rule? But the test of the fitness of the people for self-government is not that every man, woman and child should be first educated. The hollowness of this plea was ably exposed by the late Mr. George Yule in his address as President of our National Congress in 1888. "Quoting Prof. Thorold Rogers, he pointed out that a hundred years ago, not one man in ten or one woman in twenty knew how to read or write in England. Going another century or two back, he added, the people of England, man and boy, high and low with the exception of a mere handful, were steeped in gross

ignorance and yet there was a House of Commons." And, I believe, we have now at the present moment in India twenty millions who can read and write.

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

Now I come to the all-absorbing question which stirred India because of the declaration of the "Entente Cordiale" between the Hindus and the Muslims made in the City of Bombay last Christmas. I believe all thinking men are thoroughly convinced that the key-note of our real progress lies in the good-will, concord, harmony and co-operation between the two great sister communities. The true focus of progress is centred in their union and remember this is a matter which is entirely in our own hands. It was three years ago that the All-India Muslim League adopted the ideal of self-government under the "aegis" of the British Crown which was hailed by the Indian National Congress at Karachi where the following resolution was passed:

> *That this Congress places on record its warm appreciation of the adoption by the All-India Muslim League of the ideal of self-government for India within the British Empire and expresses its complete accord with the belief that the League has so emphatically declared*

> *at its last session that the political future of the country depends on the harmonious working and co-operation of the various communities in the country which has been the cherished ideal of the Congress. The Congress most heartily welcomes the hope expressed by the League that the leaders of the different communities will make every endeavour to find a* modus operandi *for joint and concerted action on all questions of national good and earnestly appeals to all the sections of the people to help the object which we all have at heart.*

Since then the programme of the All-India Muslim League has been more and more approximated to that of the Indian National Congress. There is but one question besides the question of cow-killing and street-music which has proved not only a thorny question, but an obstacle which has kept the two communities hitherto apart. But the solution is not difficult. It requires a true spirit of conciliation and give and take. The Muslims want proper, adequate and effective representation in the Council Chambers of the country and in the District and Municipal Boards, a claim which no right-minded Hindu disputes for a moment. But the Muslims further require that representation in the various boards and Council Chambers should

be secured to them by means of separate electorates. This question of separate electorates from the top to bottom has been before the country ever since 1909 and, rightly or wrongly, the Muslim community is absolutely determined for the present to insist upon separate electorates. To most of us the question is no more open to further discussion or argument as it has become a mandate of community. As far as I understand, the demand for separate electorates is not a matter of policy but a matter of necessity to the Muslims who require to be roused from the coma and torpor into which they had fallen so long. I would therefore appeal to my Hindu brethren that in the present state of position they should try to win the confidence and trust of the Muslims who are, after all, in the minority in the country. If they are determined to have separate electorates, no resistance should be shown to their demands.

There are other questions of most vital and paramount importance to both the Hindus and Muslims, that require united concerted action. Differences in details, such as method of securing to Muslims their adequate share in the Council Chambers, Municipal and District Boards should not be allowed to create an *impasse* and one side or the other must give in. I would, therefore, appeal to my Hindu friends to be

generous and liberal and welcome and encourage other activities of Muslims even if it involves some sacrifice in the matter of separate electorates. And I may have to say something more fully on this question at the sessions of the All-India Muslim League I have been called to preside next Christmas. But the committees appointed by the Congress and the League in Bombay will soon meet at Calcutta to formulate a scheme of reforms and I most fervently pray that they will both adopt a scheme that may go out to the world as the united demand of India.

One thing is, however, clear. It is not a question of a few more seats going to the Muslims or the Hindus. It is a question, as I have already pointed out, in the first instance, of transfer of the power from the bureaucracy to democracy. Let us concentrate all our attention and energy on this question alone for the present.

The Hindus and the Muslims should stand united and use every constitutional and legitimate means to effect that transfer as soon as possible. But for a real New India to arise, all petty and small things must be given up. " She is now India irrendenta and to be redeemed, all Indians must offer to sacrifice not their good things, but all those evil things they cling to blindly—

their hates and their divisions, their pride in what they should be thoroughly ashamed of, their quarrels and misunderstandings. These were a sacrifice that God would love."

Now, ladies and gentlemen, I have done. In conclusion, let me tell you that, after all, a great deal depends upon ourselves. Hindus and Muslims united and firm, the voice of the three hundred million of people vibrating throughout the length and breadth of the country, will produce a force which no power on earth can resist. India has, I believe, turned a corner. She has passed through great sufferings and borne them patiently for centuries. There is now a bright and a great future in front of her. We are on a straight road; the promised land is within sight. "Forward" is the motto and clear course for young India. But in the onward march, we must be circumspect, and never lose sight of the true perspective before us. And wisdom and caution should be our watchwords.

APPENDIX III

MUSLIM LEAGUE PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS DELIVERED BY M. A. JINNAH AT LUCKNOW

Ladies and Gentlemen,

No more conventional words are needed on my part to express my deep thanks for the great privilege you have conferred on me by selecting me as President of the ninth Annual Session of the All-India Muslim League. The honour is the highest in the gift of the Muslim community, to which those alone may aspire who have given freely of their thought and time to the service of the communal cause. I am fully sensible of how little I have done to deserve such distinction, nor could I have the presumption to desire it with such a clear sense of my own unworthiness. This choice, however, has come to me in the nature of a mandate from my community and in such cases individual considerations cannot and must not stand in the way of the larger will. I accept the great and heavy responsibilities of the position only in the belief that I can unreservedly count on your sympathy, zeal and ready co-operation in the great task that lies before us.

As President of the Bombay Presidency Provincial Conference, which was held at Ahmedabad only a few weeks ago, I have had to make a pronouncement ; but at the time I accepted the honour of presiding over the Conference, I did not know that I should have this unique honour and responsibility of expressing my views as your President again within so short a time. Much of the ground was covered by me in that speech of mine. I do not now wish to repeat what I said then, nor do I wish to deal with many great and burning questions and problems that affect India in her internal administration. They will, no doubt, be placed before you in the form of resolutions which will be submitted by the speakers in charge of them for your deliberation and consideration. At the present moment the attention of the country at large is entirely concentrated and solely rivetted on the war and what will happen after the war. I have, therefore, decided mainly to deal with the situation in my presidential address on those lines, and I will endeavour to place before you my humble views for your consideration, at the same time hoping and trusting that my feeble voice may reach those who hold the destinies of India in their hands.

ANNUAL STOCK-TAKING

In this great annual meeting of representative Musalmans from all parts of India, who

have come to deliberate and take counsel together on the large and important issues that govern our destiny in this land, it will not be out of place to take a wide survey of the conditions in which our lot is cast. This is primarily the time for annual stock-taking, for testing our position in the light of the experience of the past year, for an intelligent preparation of ways and means for meeting the demands of the future, and, above all, for refreshing, so to speak, the ideals that feed the springs of our faith, hope and endeavour. This I take to be the fundamental object for which the annual sessions of political bodies like the All-India Muslim League are held. The circumstances, however, in which we meet to-day, are exceptional and mark a new epoch in the history of our country. All that is great and inspiring in the common affairs of men, for which the noblest and most valiant of mankind have lived and wrought and suffered in all ages and all climes, is now moving India out of its depths. The whole country is awakening to the call of its destiny and is scanning the new horizons with eager hope. A new spirit of earnestness, confidence and resolution is abroad in the land. In all directions are visible the stirrings of a new life. The Musalmans of India would be false to themselves and the traditions of their past, had they not shared to the full the new hope that is moving India's patriotic sons to-day, or had

they failed to respond to the call of their country. Their gaze, like that of their Hindu fellow-countrymen, is fixed on the future.

But, gentlemen of the All-India Muslim League, remember that the gaze of your community and of the whole country is at this moment fixed on you. The decisions that you may take in this historic hall, and at this historic Session of the League, will go forth with all the force and weight that can legitimately be claimed by the chosen leaders and representatives of 70 million of Indian Musalmans. On the nature of those decisions will depend in a large measure the fate of India's future—of India's unity and of our common ideals and aspirations for constitutional freedom. The moment for decision has arrived. The alternatives are clear and unmistakable. The choice lies in our hands.

THE WAR

The future historian, while chronicling the cataclysms and convulsions of these times, will not fail to note the conjunction of events of boundless influence and scope that have made the fortunes of India so largely depend on the united will and effort of this generation. These events have, of course, flowed from the world-shaking crisis into which Europe was plunged in August, 1914. What this dark period has meant in accumulated agony,

suffering, destruction and loss to mankind, is beyond any standard of computation known to history. With the unfolding of this appalling tragedy have emerged into light, stark, elemental forces of savagery that lay behind a bright and glittering mask of "Kultur," which threaten to sweep away the very foundations of civilised life and society. The issues which are in death grips on the battle-field of three continents, go to the roots of the principles on which the fabric of modern civilisation has been reared by the energy and toil of countless generations. Freedom, justice, right and public law are pitted against despotism, aggression, anarchy and brute force and the result of this deadly combat will decide the future of mankind—whether the end will come with a stricken and shattered world, lying bleeding and helpless under the iron heel of the tyrant, with the whole of humanity stripped bare off its hope and faith and reduced to bondage, or whether the hideous nightmare will pass away and the world, redeemed by the blood of the heroic defenders of civilisation and freedom, regain its heritage of peace and enter a period of vaster and more glorious synthesis and reconstruction.

INDIA'S LOYALTY

These are tremendous issues and the blood of every Indian with his usual gift of

quick moral perception is stirred by the feeling that he is a citizen of an empire which has staked its all in a supreme endeavour to vindicate the cause of freedom and of right. What India has given in this fellowship of service and sacrifice has been a free and spontaneous tribute to the ideals of the great British nation, as well as a necessary contribution to the strength of the fighting forces of civilisation, which are so valiantly rolling back the tides of scientifically organised barbarism. In this willing service of the people of India, there has been no distinction of class or creed. It has come from every part of the land and from every community with equal readiness and devotion. In this service there has been no cold, calculating instinct at work. It has sprung from a clear, compelling sense of duty and moral sympathy and not from any commercial desire to make a safe political investment. India's loyalty to the Empire has set no price on itself.

RECONSTRUCTION

After such colossal upheavals as this war, the world cannot quietly slip back into its old grooves of life and thought. Much of what the existing generations have known in social and political arrangements is visibly passing away under a deluge of blood and fire. The thick crust of materialism and pampered case, the inertia of habit, the

cramping weight of convention and of institutions that have outlived their use, have fallen off from the lives of the great Western Democracies under the stress of this great struggle for their existence. They have been thrown back on themselves. In the hot furnace of elemental passions, the trifles are being burnt to ashes, the gold is being made pure of dross; and when the terrible ordeal has passed, the liberated soul will feel almost primeval ease and power to plan, to build and to create fresh, ampler and freer conditions of life for the future. The range of choice would be unlimited and the need for bold constructive efforts in various directions vital and urgent. Europe after the war will call for statesmanship of a new order to undertake the gigantic tasks of peace. The greatest victory for freedom will have to be conserved. Free nations will have to learn to live freely and intensely. Freedom itself will have to be organised, its bounds made vaster and its powers of self-preservation strengthened and increased.

THE INDIAN PROBLEM

These tasks have peculiar urgency and significance in the case of the vast and various communities comprising the British Empire. And among the complex series of problems relating to the Imperial reconstruction awaiting British statesmanship, none is of more anxious moment than the problem of reconstruction

in India. I need not set about to discuss in detail the Indian problem in all its beatings. It has been discussed threadbare by all men from every conceivable angle of vision. However, there are two cardinal facts about the Indian situation which practical statesmanship will have to take into account while addressing itself to the study of the problem and its adequate solution. There is, first, the great fact of the British standards of administration, which, while retaining absolute power of initiative, direction and decision, has maintained for many decades unbroken peace and order in the land, administered even-handed justice, brought the Indian mind, through a widespread system of Western education, into contact with the thought and ideals of the West and thus led to the birth of a great and living movement for the intellectual and moral regeneration of the people. Here I may quote from the speech of H. E. Lord Chelmsford delivered in Calcutta the other day: "The growing self-respect and self-consciousness of her (India's) people are plants that we ourselves have watered." Secondly, there is the fact of the existence of a powerful, unifying process—the most vital interesting result of Western education in the country—which is creating out of the diverse mass of race and creed a new India fast growing to unity of thought, purpose and outlook, responsive to new appeals of territorial patriotism and nationality, stirring with new energy

and aspiration and becoming daily more purposeful and eager to recover its birth-right, to direct its own affairs and govern itself. To put it briefly, we have a powerful and efficient bureaucracy of British officers responsible only to the British Parliament, governing with methods known as benevolent despotism, a people that have grown fully conscious of their destiny and are peacefully struggling for political freedom. This is the Indian problem in a nutshell. The task of British statesmanship is to find a prompt, peaceful and enduring solution of this problem.

If it were possible to isolate the tangled group of social and political phenomena and subject it to a thorough investigation by reason unalloyed by sentiment, it would be infinitely easier to find a safe and sure path for Indian political development and advance. But, as you know, pure, unalloyed reason is not the chief motive power in human things. In the affairs of our common secular existence, we have to deal not with angels but with men, with passions, prejudices, personal idiosyncrasies, innumerable cross-currents of motive, of desire, hope, fear and hate. The Indian probem has all such formidable complications in its texture. We have, for instance, the large and trained body of English officials who carry on the administration of the country and exercise power over the well-being and happiness of the teeming millions of this land.

They are most of them hard-working, efficient and conscientious public servants, and yet they are beset by the prejudices and limitations that mark them as a class apart. They are naturally conservative, have a rooted horror of bold administrative changes or constitutional experiments, are reluctant to part with power or associate Indians freely in the government of the country. Their main concern appears to be to work the machine smoothly, content to go through their common round from day to day; and they feel bored and worried and upset by the loud, confident and unsettling accents of new India. All this is eminently human; but it also means an enormous aggravation of the difficulties in the path of final settlement. It means in actual experience the growth of a tremendous class-interest, the interest of the governing class as distinct from, if not wholly opposed to, the interest of the governed. It is, in fact, the existence of this vast, powerful and by no means silent "interest" that explains the origin and wide currency of certain shallow, bastard and desperate political maxims, which are flung into the face of Indian patriots at the least provocation. They are familiar enough to all students of Indian affairs. As a sample, we may take the following:

(1) The Democratic institutions cannot thrive in the environment of the East. (Why? Were democratic institutions

unknown to the Hindus and Muslims in the past? What was the village Panchayat? What are the history, the traditions, the literature and the precepts of Islam? There are no people in the world who are more democratic even in their religion than the Musalmans.)

(2) The only form of government suitable to India is autocracy, tempered by English (European) efficiency and character. (All nations have had to go through the experience of despotic or autocratic government at one time or the other in the history of the world. Russia was liberated to a certain extent only a few years ago. France and England had to struggle before they conquered the autocracy. Is India to remain under the heel of novel form of autocracy in the shape of bureaucracy for all time to come, when Japan and even China have set up constitutional Governments on the democratic lines of Great Britain and America?)

(3) (a) The interests of the educated classes are opposed to those of the Indian masses and (b) the former would oppress the latter if the strong protecting hand of the British officials

were withdrawn. (This astonishing proposition beats all reason and sense. It is suggested that we who are the very kith and kin of the masses, most of us springing from the middle classes, are likely to oppress the people if more power is conferred; that the masses require protection at the hands of the English officials, between whom and the people there is nothing in common; that our interests are opposed to those of the masses—in what respect, it is never pointed out—and that, therefore, the monopoly of the administrative control should continue in the hands of non-Indian officials. This insidious suggestion, which is so flippantly made, is intended to secure the longest possible lease for the bureaucracy and to enjoy their monopoly. But it can neither stand the light of facts, nor the analysis of truth. One has only to look at the past records of the Congress for more than a quarter of a century and of the All-India Muslim League to dismiss this specious plea. The educated people of this country have shown greater anxiety and solicitude for the welfare and advancement of the masses than for any other question during the last quarter of century.)

(4) Indians are unfit to govern themselves. (With this last question I propose to deal later in my speech).

These are a few of the baseless and silly generalities in which the advocates of the existing methods of Indian governance indulge freely and provocatively when the least menace arises to the monopoly of the bureaucratic authority and power.

INTERVAL SITUATION

Again, if we turn to the internal situation in India, we meet with a set of social, ethnological and cultural conditions unparalleled in recorded history. We have a vast continent inhabited by 315 millions of people sprung from various racial stock, inheriting various cultures and professing a variety of religious creeds. This stupendous human group thrown together under one physical and political environment, is still in various stages of intellectual and moral growth. All this means a great diversity of outlook, purpose and endeavour. Every Indian nationalist who has givien close and anxious thought to the problem of nation-building in India, fully realises the magnitude of his task. He is not afraid of admitting frankly that difficulties exist in his path. Such difficulties have no terrors for him. They are already vanishing before the forces which are developing in the New Spirit.

INDIA FOR THE INDIANS

Well, these are the broad aspects of the Indian problem and they will give you a fairly general idea of the obstacles that stand in the way of a full and speedy realisation of the ideals of Indian patriots. We have a powerfully organised body of conservative " interest " on the one hand, and a lack of complete organisation of the national will and intelligence on the other. There is, however, one fundamental fact, that stands out clear and unmistakable, which no sophistry of argument and no pseudo-scientific theories about colour and race can disguise. Amid the class of warring interests and the noise of foolish catchwords, no cool-headed student of Indian affairs can lose sight of the great obvious truism that India is in the first and the last resort for the Indians. Be the time near or distant, the Indian people are bound to attain to their full stature as a self-governing nation. No force in the world can rob them of their destiny and thwart the purposes of Providence. British statesmanship has not become bankrupt or utterly bereft of its faculty of clear political perception ; and it is, therefore, bound to recognise that the working of the law of national development in India, which came to birth with the British Rule itself, and is daily gathering momentum under the pressure of the world-forces of freedom and progress, must sooner or later produce a change in the princi-

ples and methods of Indian governance. It is inevitable. Then why not fight against it, why ignore it, why should not rather there be honest, straightforward efforts to clear the way of doubts, suspicions and senseless antagonisms to that glorious consummation? Leaving aside the hare-brained twaddle of the tribe of scientific peddlers who love to sit in judgment on the East and ape political philosophy, no man with the least pretensions to common-sense, can affect to maintain that Indian humanity is stamped with a ruthless psychology and cramped for ever within the prison of its skull. If the Indians are not the *pariahs* of Nature, if they are not out of the pale or operation of the laws that govern mankind elsewhere, if their minds can grow in knowledge and power and can think and plan and organise together for the common needs of the present and for the common hopes of the future, then the only future for them is self-government, *i.e.*, the attainment of the power to apply through properly organised channels, the common national will and intelligence to the needs and tasks of their national existence. The cant of unfitness must die. The laws of nature and the doctrines of common humanity are not different in the East.

OFFICIAL ATTITUDE

It is a great relief to think that some of the responsible British statesmen have defi-

nitely pronounced in recent years that India's ambition to attain self-government is neither a catastrophe nor a sin. Indeed, that great and sympathetic Viceroy, Lord Hardinge, whose memory will always be cherished with affection by the people of this country, for the first time recognised the legitimacy of that vital Indian aspiration. Other indications have not been wanting of late, which go to show that our national dream and purpose is gaining the stamp of even official approval. There is, however, a world of difference between a theoretical approval of an ideal and its practical application. The supreme duty of the men that lead the forces of Indian progress is to insist that India's rulers should definitely set the ideal before them as the ultimate goal to be attained within reasonable time and should accelerate the pace accordingly. All our difficulties now arise from the steady reluctance on the part of Indian officialdom to keep this end definitely in view and move faster. Mere sympathy divorced from resolute and active progressive policy can hardly ameliorate the situation. Honeyed words alone cannot suffice. We may congratulate each other about a changed "angle of vision" and yet remain where we are till Doomsday. The time for definite decision and a bold move forward has arrived. The vital question to-day is: Is India fit to be free and to what extent? There can be no shelving of the issue at this juncture. It must be settled one way or the

other. If she is not fit to-day, she has got to be made fit for self-government. This, I maintain, is no less a duty and responsibility of the Government than of the people themselves.

TEST OF FITNESS

Is India fit for freedom? We, who are present here to-day, know full well that from the Indian standpoint there can be but one answer. Our critics would probably challenge our conviction. Our only reply to them would be to go forward and put the matter to the proof. After all, what is the test of fitness? If we turn to history, we find that in the past only such people have been declared to have been fit for freedom who fought for it and attained it. We are living in different times. Peace has its victories. We are fighting and can only fight constitutional battles. This peaceful struggle is not and will not be wanting in the quality of vigour and sacrifice, and we are determined to convince the British Empire that we are fit for the place of a partner within the Empire, and nothing less will satisfy India.

MOVEMENT FOR UNITY

But apart from the numerous other considerations that have repeatedly been urged in support of the claims of India to responsible and representative form of Government, the

one that has grown to be of infinitely larger weight and urgency is the living and vigorous spirit of patriotism and national self-consciousness which is chafing under irksome restraints and is seeking wider and legitimate outlets for service and self-expression. The strength and volume of this spirit, this pent-up altruistic feeling and energy of youth, can be easily realised by those who have their finger on the pulse of the country. The most significant and hopeful aspect of this spirit is that it has taken its rise from a new-born movement in the direction of national unity which has brought Hindus and Muslims together involving brotherly service for the common cause. Bombay had the good fortune to see the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League meet for the first time in the same city last December. These simultaneous sessions were brought about with no little labour, anxiety and trouble. I do not wish to go into past controversy, but I venture to say that the session of the All-India Muslim League at Bombay will go down to posterity as peculiarly interesting in its results. The so-called opponents of ours, although for the time being they caused the utmost anxiety and individual risks—which, after all, do not count in a national movement—have, I cannot help saying, rendered the greatest service to our cause. Their unjust attitude served only to stiffen the back of the community. The League rose Phoenix-like, stronger, more

solidified and determined in its ideals and aspirations, with added strength of resolution in carrying out its programme. And to-day your historic city of Lucknow, the centre of Musalman culture and intellect, where three years ago the All-India Muslim League laid down our cherished ideal of self-government under the aegis of the British Crown, is witnessing the simultaneous sessions of the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League once more. Indeed, the person who fails to read in the Hindu-Muslim rapprochement within the last few years the first great sign of the birth of united India has little knowledge of the political conditions of a few years ago and has no business to talk of India's future.

IDEALS OF THE LEAGUE

I need hardly say that the Hindu-Muslim question had hitherto lain as a colossal riddle athwart the numerous unifying forces that make for the evolution of a common Indian Nationality. The new temper that we witness to-day is the measure of the change that has happily come over Hindu-Muslim relations. What this change really signifies can only be judged by a reference to the state of things that obtained only a few years ago, when mutual distrust and suspicion were rampant and communal bigots on either side ruled the roost. Everyone of us can easily recall the

frame of Muslim mind and feeling in which the All-India Muslim League was founded at Dacca. To put it frankly, the All-India Muslim League came into existence as an organisation with the main object of safeguarding Muslim interests. Musalmans, as a community, had till then abstained from all manner of political agitation and they were naturally moved by the loud and insistent demand for constitutional and administrative reforms which Hindu politicians were pressing on the Indian Government. They felt—and rightly—the need for organising themselves for political action, lest the impending changes initiated by a liberal Secretary of State should swamp them altogether as a community. This was, perhaps, the only course open to a community proud of the traditions of its past, yet weak in numbers and lacking the strength that organised political activity alone can give. The main principle on which the first All-India Muslim political organisation was based, was the retention of Muslim communal individuality strong and unimpaired in any constitutional readjustment that might be made in India in the course of its political evolution. The creed has grown and broadened with the growth of political life and thought in the community. In its general outlook and ideal as regards the future, the All-India Muslim League stands abreast of the Indian National Congress and is ready to participate in any patriotic efforts for the

advancement of the country as a whole. In fact, this readiness of the educated Muslims, only about a decade after they first entered the field of politics, to work shoulder to shoulder with the other Indian communities for the common good of all is to my mind the strongest proof of the value and need of the separate Muslim political organisation at present. I have been a staunch Congressman throughout my public life and have been no lover of sectarian cries, but it appears to me that the reproach of "separatism" sometimes levelled at Musalmans, is singularly inept and wide of the mark, when I see this great communal organisation rapidly growing into a powerful factor for the birth of United India. A minority must, above everything else, have a complete sense of security before its broader political sense can be evoked for co-operation and united endeavour in the national tasks. To the Musalmans of India that security can only come through adequate and effective safeguards as regards their political existence as a community. Whatever my individual opinion may be, I am here to interpret and express the sense of the overwhelming body of Muslim opinion, of which the All-India Muslim League is the political organ.

HINDU-MUSLIM RELATIONS

It is a matter of infinite gratification to me as well as to all patriotic Musalmans that

the Muslim communal position in this matter has been recognised and met in an ungrudging spirit by the leaders of the great Hindu community. This was so amply demonstrated by the happy and unanimous decision that was arrived at by the Committees of the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League that met at Calcutta only last November. Our joint Conferences in Lucknow were marked by honest efforts on either side to find a lasting solution of our differences, and I rejoice to think that a final settlement has at last been reached which sets the seal on Hindu-Muslim co-operation and opens a new era in the history of our country. A few irreconcilable spirits in either camp may still exist here and there, but the atmosphere has on the whole been rid of the menace of sectarian thunder and the prospects of the future are bright with a promise that gladdens the hearts of India's devoted sons. Just as I have no sympathy with a member of my community who even with an assured communal existence would not extend the hand of fellowship to his Hindu brother, so I cannot appreciate the attitude of the Hindu patriot who would insist on his pound of flesh, though, in this struggle, the entire future of the country for the sake of a small gain to one side or the other, may be marred for ever. As an instance, I would like to point out the recent unfortunate controversy that was raised in these provinces over the

passing of the Municipal Act. But, surely, we are not wanting in political wisdom and sagacity. Let us remember, whether Hindus or Musalmans, that New India wants a wholly different type of public worker, of more generous spirit and ampler mould, free from the egoism of sect and the narrowness of bigotry, one who can resist the temptation to crush the weak and yet would not quail before the aggression of the strong, who can rise above the petty preoccupations of the day to the higher plane of devotion and service which alone can give to a people, faith, hope, freedom and power.

SCHEME OF REFORMS

With the satisfactory solution of the most formidable problem that stood in the path of Indian progress towards political co-operation and unity, our constitutional battle may be said to have been half won already. The united Indian demand, based on the actual needs of the country and framed with due regard to time and circumstances, must eventually prove irresistible. It must also be recognised that those responsible for the Government of India have already shown a disposition to treat the existing grievances of the people in a broader spirit of understanding and sympathy. With the restoration of peace the Indian problem will have to be dealt with on bold and generous lines and India will

have to be granted her birth-right as a free, responsible and equal member of the British Empire. How this change is to be effected and what are to be the lines of development and methods of solution, are matters that have been fully occupying the thoughts of Indian publicists for the past two years and authoritative schemes of readjustment have already been formulated and placed before the Government by the nineteen elected representatives of the Imperial Council. You are aware that a Committee of the All-India Muslim League was formed last year and was authorised to draw up a scheme of reform in consultation with the Committee of the Indian National Congress. That scheme is ready and will, at this session, be submitted to you for your consideration and judgment.

A NEW BILL

After you have adopted the scheme of reforms you should see that the Congress and the League take concerted measures to have a Bill drafted by constitutional lawyers as an amending Bill to the Government of India Act which embodies the present constitution of our country. This Bill, when ready, should be adopted by the Indian National Congress and the All-India Muslim League and a deputation of leading representative men from both the bodies should be appointed to see that the Bill is introduced in the British

Parliament and adopted. For that purpose we should raise as large a fund as possible to supply the sinews of war until our aim and object are fulfilled.

POSITION OF INDIA IN THE EMPIRE

The first and the foremost question that requires to be put at rest, is that the position of India in the Empire should be defined in the most unequivocal terms. It should be made clear by the Government in an authoritative manner that self-government is not a mere distant goal that may be attained at some future indefinite time, but that self-government for India is the definite aim and object of the Government to be given to the people within a reasonable time. That should be the aim and object of the reconstruction and reformation of the present constitution of the Government of India and immediate steps should be taken after the war to introduce the reforms towards that end in view, both by the Government and the people.

IMPERIAL PARTNERSHIP

Reading the signs of the times, it appears that the claims of the overseas Dominions, such as Canada, Australia and even South Africa, *viz.*, to allow them a voice in the declaration of war and the making

of peace and in Imperial Foreign policy, if they are to bear the responsibilities of the Empire, cannot well be resisted, and it might follow that an Imperial Parliament may be constructed and established, England, Scotland and Ireland having their separate Parliaments for the purpose of managing their internal and domestic affairs, such as the Dominions already have. Sir Joseph Ward, addressing the meeting of the Insurance Institute at Gresham College only last month, said that "in the future reconstruction of the Empire there could not be any interference with local authority and, though an Imperial Parliament was a long way off, they might now work for some effective Imperial Council and that before an organic Parliament was possible, there must be devolution in Britain to pave the way for a federal legislature overseas. The Dominions had no right even to a minority voice as to whether the nation should go to war or what the peace terms should be." He quoted Mr. Asquith's speech at the 1911 Imperial Conference in which the Prime Minister stated that "an Imperial Parliament scheme would impair the authority of the British Parliament." "Since then," Sir Joseph said, "there had been a great evolution of opinion on the subject. Mr. Bonar Law had declared as a result of the war that time was coming when the overseas Dominions would share in the Government of the Empire with Britain. He hoped that before the war

ended some *modus vivendi* would be established." In the political reconstruction, India, the largest part of the Empire, cannot possibly be allowed to continue a dependency, as an adjunct to England, Scotland or Ireland or to be ruled and governed by the Dominions. Hitherto the responsibility, the control and the supervision of India has been vested in Great Britain. The question naturally arises what will be the position of India if an Imperial Parliament with full representation of the Dominions is constituted? Is India to be ruled jointly by England, Scotland, Ireland and the Dominions? Are we to be handed over to this Imperial Parliament and to be thus ruled and to be governed by the Colonies? Are we not to have a status or *locus standi* in this Imperial Parliament? I feel sure that I am expressing the opinion of the entire educated people of this country that India will never allow herself to be relegated to such an intolerable position. Indeed, she does not want a change of masters, nor additional masters. If an Imperial Parliament, such as indicated above, is established, India's right should be recognised and her voice in that Imperial Parliament must be fully and properly secured and represented by her own sons in the Councils of the Empire.

MINIMUM DEMANDS

Next, it is well known that the reforms that are sought by the people of India to be

introduced in the constitutional Government of India, were fully adumbrated recently by the nineteen elected members of the Imperial Legislative Council and I do not wish to repeat them here, as I believe you are all familiar with them already. I was one of the signatories and I would urge upon you to follow them substantially so far as fundamental principles are involved in these proposals. Those demands were formulated by responsible men who own duty to the Government and the people alike as " chosen representatives " not in a spirit of bargaining. Those demands are the minimum in the strictest sense of the word. It is said that these are extravagant demands. It is said it is a big thing. It is said that we are not yet ready for them. It is said that if these reforms are introduced, there will be chaos, and particularly the Anglo-Indian press is not only most unreasonable and disappointing but alarmed. These are mere destructive methods. Similar fears were raised and arguments advanced when the Minto-Morley Reforms were on the legislative anvil. But what is the verdict now, official and non-official, after nearly seven years of actual trial? Need I give the answer? We have not been favoured either by our critics or by the Government as to what is the alternative scheme. We are not taken into the confidence of the secret chambers of the Government where the Government of India, it is said, have been deliberating upon and prepar-

ing a despatch containing their proposals of reform to be submitted to the Secretary of State for India. In England, the representative of the Colonies and the Press and the people and the Ministers are freely discussing the reconstruction of the constitution of the Empire after the war, nay, even before the war is over it is suggested to set up an Imperial Council, whereas in India we are denied the opportunity of knowing even what the Government is contemplating. It will be a great misfortune if any decisions are arrived at with regard to the future of India by the Government and the Secretary of State for India without the proposals being published and placed before the country at large for public criticism and opinion. I must earnestly urge upon the Government that before any final decision is arrived at, the proposed reforms should be published and the people should be given an opportunity to urge their views, and that they should be taken into their confidence. I feel that if the people are bitterly disappointed at this juncture, it will mean the greatest disaster to the future progress of this country.

QUESTION OF THE CALIPHATE

I should be failing in my duty towards my own people and the Government if I did not, at this crisis, make it clear that of the many delicate questions, there is none that requires a closer attention and study than the

question of the Caliphate by the Government and the Ministers of Great Britain. The sentiments and feelings and the religious convictions not only of the Musalmans of India but of the Musalmans of the world are not to be lightly treated. The loyalty of the Musalmans of India to the Government is no small asset. From the very commencement of the great crisis through which the British Empire has been passing, the allegiance of the Musalmans to the Crown and their loyalty to the Government has remained whole-hearted and unshaken. May I, therefore, urge that the Government should have regard for their dearest and most sacred religious feelings and under no circumstances interfere with the question of the future of the Caliphate. It should be left entirely to the Musalmans to acknowledge and accept their own Caliph. I do not desire to dilate on this grave and delicate subject ; but much deeper currents underlie this exceptional exhortation of mine, which I have ventured to make both in the interests of the Musalmans and the Government of Great Britain, than it would be expedient at present to discuss on a public platform. But the Musalmans may well claim that their feelings and sentiments relating to their most cherished traditions should receive consideration in the general policy of the Empire, particularly when they coincide with the demands of justice, humanity and international obligations.

HOLY PLACES OF ISLAM

As a spokesman of the Musalmans of India, I must here acknowledge that the noble assurance of the British Government given to them through H. E. Lord Hardinge, the ex-Viceroy of India, as regards the Holy Places of Islam, was received by them not only with the utmost satisfaction but with profound gratitude.

MUSLIM ATTITUDE

I may say a word as to the attitude of the Musalmans of India towards the Government. Our clear duty is to be loyal and respectful, without stooping to a cringing policy. We want no favours, and crave for no partial treatment. That is demoralising to the community and injurious to the State. The Musalmans must learn to have self-respect. What we want is a healthy and fair impetus to be given to our aspirations and ideals as a community and it is the most sacred duty of the Government to respond to that claim. Towards the Hindus our attitude should be of good-will and brotherly feelings. Co-operation in the cause of our motherland should be our guiding principle. India's real progress can only be achieved by a true understanding and harmonious relations between the two great sister communities. With regard to our own affairs, we can depend upon nobody but ourselves.

We should infuse greater spirit of solidarity into our society. We should remove the root causes and the evil effects of the process of disintegration. We should maintain a sustained loyalty to and co-operation with each other. We should sink presonal differences and subordinate personal ambitions to the well-being of the community. We must recognise that no useful purpose is served in petty disputes and in forming party combinations. We should not lose the sympathy of our well-wishers in India and in England by creating a wrong impression that we, as a community, are out only for self-interest and self-gain. We must show by our words and deeds that we sincerely and earnestly desire a healthy national unity. For the rest, the 70 million of Musalmans need not fear.

RELIGIOUS DIFFERENCES

A few days ago I came across a paragraph in the *Bombay Chronicle*, the well-known daily paper of Bombay, with its Editor Mr. B. G. Horniman, a friend of the Musalmans who has rendered great services to us. It is as follows:

" The following incident, reported by the *Amrita Bazar Patrika*, may well be read with profit by those whose perverse imaginations, in spite of proofs to the contrary, always see in the differences of religions in India an

irremovable bar against placing Indians in high offices of trust and responsibility.

" This is how H. H. the Nizam has just disposed of a Hindu-Musalman dispute in his territory. Well, for about a year or so, there sprang a quarrel between the Hindus and the Musalmans of Warrangal about the building of a mosque in a prominent Hindu locality. In spite of many protests from the Hindu population, the other party persisted on constructing one. The Hindus then appealed to His Highness with the result that he was pleased to appoint a committee of enquiry consisting of two Musalmans and one Hindu to report on the matter. The report was in favour of the Hindus and His Highness has been pleased to pass his orders accordingly.

" The action taken by H. H. the Nizam, it need hardly be added, was in accordance with the traditional policy always adopted by the rulers of Hyderabad."

Why can't we, in British India, the Hindus and the Musalmans, try the methods which prove so successful in the territories of H. H. the Nizam, to settle our differences?

CONCLUSION

In conclusion I cannot do better than quote a passage from the recent speech of

the Prime Minister Mr. Lloyd George, every word of which almost literally applies to the conditions in India. Referring to the Irish situation he said, he was convinced now that it was a misunderstanding, partly racial, partly religious. It was to the interest of both to have it removed. But there seemed to have been some evil chance that frustrated every effort made for the achievement of better relations. He had tried once but did not succeed. But the fault was not entirely on one side. He had felt the whole time that we were moving in an atmosphere of nervous suspicions and distrust, pervasive and universal, of everything and everybody. He was drenched with suspicion of Irishmen by Englishmen and of Englishmen by Irishmen and, worse and most fatal of all, by the suspicion of Irishmen by Irishmen. It was a quagmire of distrust which clogged the footsteps of progress. That was the real enemy of Ireland. If that could be slain, he believed, it would accomplish an act of reconciliation that would make Ireland greater and Britain greater and would make the United Kingdom and the Empire greater than they ever were before.

The renaissance of India really lies in our own hands. Let us work and trust in God, so that we may leave a rich heritage to our children than all the gold of the world, *viz.*, Freedom, for which no sacrifice is too great.

APPENDIX IV
LUCKNOW MUSLIM LEAGUE RESOLUTION

The All-India Musilm League, while adopting the scheme of reforms prepared by the Reform Committee of the League and approved by its Council, submits it in conjunction with the Indian National Congress to the Government for its introduction after the war as the first necessary step towards the establishment of complete Self-Government in India.

REFORM SCHEME

I.—Provincial Legislative Councils.

1. Provincial Legislative Councils shall consist of four-fifths elected and of one-fifth nominated members.

2. Their strength shall be not less than 125 members in the major provinces, and from 50 to 75 in the minor provinces.

3. The members of Councils should be elected directly by the people on as broad a franchise as possible.

4. Adequate provision should be made for the representation of important minorities by election, and the Musalmans should be represented through special electorates on the

Provincial Legislative Councils in the following propositions :—

Punjab—one-half of the elected Indian members.

United Provinces—30 p. c. of the elected Indian members.

Bengal—40 p. c. of the elected Indian members.

Bihar—25 p. c. of the elected Indian members.

Central Provinces—15 p. c. of the elected Indian members.

Madras—15 p. c. of the elected Indian members.

Bombay—One-third of the elected Indian members.

Provided that no Musalman shall participate in any of the other elections to the Imperial or Provincial Legislative Council, save and except those by electorates representing special interests.

Provided further that no bill, nor any clause thereof, nor a resolution introduced by a non-official member affecting one or the other community, which question is to be determined by the members of that community in the Legislative Council concerned, shall be proceeded with, if three-fourths of the members of that community in the particular Council, Imperial or Provincial, oppose the bill or any clause thereof or the resolution.

5. The head of the Provincial Government should not be the President of the Legislative Council, but the Council should have the right of electing its President.

6. The right of asking supplementary questions should not be restricted to the member putting the original question, but should be allowed to be exercised by any other member.

7. (*a*) Except customs, posts, telegraphs, mint, salt, opium, railways, army and navy, and tributes from Indian States, all other sources of revenue should be Provincial.

(*b*) There should be no divided heads of revenue. The Government of India should be provided with fixed contributions from the Provincial Governments, such fixed contributions being liable to revision when extraordinary and unforeseen contingencies render such revision necessary.

(*c*) The Provincial Council should have full authority to deal with all matters affecting the internal administration of the province including the power to raise loans, to impose and alter taxation, and to vote on the Budget. All items of expenditure, and all proposals concerning ways and means for raising the necessary revenue, should be embodied in Bills and submitted to the Provincial Council for adoption.

(*d*) Resolution on all matters within the purview of the Provincial Government should be allowed for discussion in accordance with rules made in that behalf by the Council itself.

(*e*) A resolution passed by the Provincial Legislative Council shall be binding on the Executive Government, unless vetoed by the Governor-in-Council, provided however, that if the resolution is again passed by the Council after an interval of not less than one year, it must be given effect to.

(*f*) A motion for adjournment may be brought forward for the discussion of a definite matter of urgent public importance, if supported by not less than one-eighth of the members present.

8. A special meeting of the Provincial Council may be summoned on a requisition by not less than one-eighth of the members.

9. A Bill, other than a Money Bill, may be introduced in Council in accordance with rules made in that behalf by the Council itself, and the consent of the Government should not be required therefor.

10. All Bills passed by Provincial Legislatures shall have to receive the assent of the Governor before they become law, but may be vetoed by the Governor-General.

11. The term of office of the members shall be five years.

II.—Provincial Governments.

1. The head of every Provincial Government shall be a Governor who shall not ordinarily belong to the Indian Civil Service or any of the permanent services.

2. There shall be in every Province an Executive Council which, with the Governor, shall constitute the Executive Government of the Province.

3. Members of the Indian Civil Service shall not ordinarily be appointed to the Executive Councils.

4. Not less than one-half of the members of the Executive Council shall consist of Indians to be elected by the elected members of the Provincial Legislative Council.

5. The term of office of the members shall be five years.

III.—Imperial Legislative Councils.

1. The strength of the Imperial Legislative Council shall be 150.

2. Four-fifths of the members shall be elected.

3. The franchise for the Imperial Legislative Council should be widened as far as possible on the lines of the electorates for Musalmans for the Provincial Legislative Councils, and the elected members of the Provincial Legislative Councils should also form an electorate for the return of members to the Imperial Legislative Council.

4. One-third of the Indian elected members should be Musalmans elected by separate Musalman electorates in the several Provinces, in the proportion, as nearly as may be, in which they are represented on the Provincial Legislative Councils by separate Musalman electorates.—*Vide* provisos to section I, clause 4.

5. The President of the Council shall be elected by the Council itself.

6. The right of asking supplementary questions shall not be restricted to the member putting the original question, but should be allowed to be exercised by any other member.

7. A special meeting of the Council may be summoned on a requisition by not less than one-eight of the members.

8 A Bill, other than a Money Bill, may be introduced in Council in accordance

with rules made in that behalf by the Council itself, and the consent of the Executive Government should not be required therefor.

9. All Bills passed by the Council shall have to receive the assent of the Governor-General before they become law.

10. All financial proposals relating to sources of income and items of expenditure shall be embodied in Bills. Every such Bill and the Budget as a whole shall be submitted for the vote of the Imperial Legislative Council.

11. The term of office of the members shall be five years.

12. The matters mentioned hereinbelow shall be exclusively under the control of the Imperial Legislative Council:—

(*a*) Matters in regard to which uniform legislation for the whole of India is desirable.

(*b*) Provincial legislalion in so far as it may affect inter-provincial fiscal relations.

(*c*) Questions affecting purely Imperial Revenue, excepting tributes from Indian States.

(*d*) Questions affecting purely Imperial expenditure, except that no resolution of the Imperial Legislative Council shall be binding on the Governor-General in Council in respect of military charges for the defence of the country.

(*e*) The right of revising Indian tariffs and custom-duties of imposing, altering, or removing any tax or cess, modifying the existing system of currency and banking, and granting any aids or bounties to any or all deserving and nascent industries of the country.

(*f*) Resolutions on all matters relating to the administration of the country as a whole.

13. A resolution passed by the Legislative Council should be binding on the Executive Government, unless vetoed by the Governor-General in Council : provided however that if the resolution is again passed by the Council after an interval of not less than one year, it must be given effect to.

14. A motion for adjournment may be brought forward for the discussion of adefi-

nite matter of urgent public importance, if supported by not less than one-eighth of the members present.

15. When the Crown chooses to exercise its power of veto in regard to a Bill passed by a Provincial Legislative Council or by the Imperial Legislative Council, it should be exercised within twelve months from the date on which it is passed, and the Bill shall cease to have effect as from the date on which the fact of such veto is made known to the Legislative Council concerned.

16. The Imperial Legislative Council shall have no power to interfere with the Government of India's direction of the military affairs and the foreign and political relations of India, including the declaration of war, the making of peace and the entering into treaties.

IV.—The Government of India.

1. The Governor-General of India will be the head of the Government of India.

2. He will have an Executive Council, half of whom shall be Indians.

3. The Indian members should be elected by the elected members of the Imperial Legislative Council.

4. Members of the Indian Civil Service shall not ordinarily be appointed to the Executive Council of the Governor-General.

5. The power of making all appointments in the Imperial Civil Services shall vest in the Government of India, as constituted under this scheme, due regard being paid to existing interests, subject to any laws that may be made by the Imperial Legislative Council.

6. The Government of India shall not ordinarily interfere in the local affairs of a province, and powers not specifically given to a Provincial Government, shall be deemed to be vested in the former. The authority of the Government of India will ordinarily be limited to general supervision and superintendence over the Provincial Governments.

7. In legislative and administrative matters the Government of India, as constituted under this scheme, shall, as far as possible, be independent of the Secretary of State.

8. A system of independent audit of the accounts of the Government of India should be instituted.

V.—The Secretary of State-in-Council.

1. The Council of the Secretary of State for India should be abolished.

2. The salary of the Secretary of State should be placed on the British Estimates.

3. The Secretary of State should, as far as possible, occupy the same position in relation to the Government of India as the Secretary of State for the Colonies does in relation to the Government of the self-governing Dominions.

4. The Secretary of State for India should be assisted by two permanent Under-Secretaries, one of whom should always be an Indian.

VI.—India and the Empire.

1. In any Council or other body which may be constituted or convened for the settlement or control of Imperial affairs, India shall be adequately represented in like manner with the Dominions and with equal rights.

2. Indians should be placed on a footing of equality in respect of status and right of citizenship with other subjects of His Majesty the King throughout the Empire.

VII.—Military and other matters.

Commissions in the Army.

1. The military and naval services of His Majesty, both in their commissioned and non-commissioned ranks, should be thrown open to Indians and adequate provision should

be made for their selection, training and in struction in India.

Volunteering.

2. Indians should be allowed to enlist as volunteers.

Separation of judicial and executive functions.

3. Executive officers in India shall have no judicial powers entrusted to them, and the judiciary in every province shall be placed under the highest Court of that province.

SYED WAZIR HASAN,

Lucknow : *Honorary Secretary,*

1st *January*, 1917. *All-India Muslim League.*

APPENDIX V

BENGAL PROVINCIAL MUSLIM LEAGUE

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I am thankful to you for having honoured me by inviting me to preside over your Provincial Muslim League Conference. I accepted your invitation all the more readily because of the political developments that have taken place during the recent months. You are in the whirlwind of a political storm in Bengal. I have come here to tell you what I think of the situation.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Muslim League has many opponents. We are going through a life and death struggle. We have made it clear over and over again that we are organising our people and have no quarrel with the Hindus or any other community, large or small, in this sub-continent. We have repeatedly declared that the cardinal principle and aim of the Muslim League is to safeguard the political rights and status of the Musalmans of India. We have been on the defensive all along and what have we been wanting? We want to live in this land as free and independent people and not under the *raj* or the government of anyone else. The arrogance, the hatred and the

aggressiveness that is demonstrated by the Hindu leaders that we must live as the minority people, under the domination of the Hindu majority, is patent. It is that policy, that programme, that aggressiveness and that offensive and arrogant attitude against which we are fighting. The Muslims in India are a nation. They will not submit to any position other than that of complete equality with the Hindu community in this country. Now, as I have said, we have our opponents. The British Government are no particular friends of the Musalmans. They have their policy and their programme just as much as the Hindus have theirs and we have ours. In the political world there is neither real justce nor fairplay. Every act and every decision is guided, unfortunately, by self-interest. We cannot look to the British Government or to anyone else for justice and fairplay. We must stand on our own legs and rely on our own strength if we are to achieve anything in this world. We must be prepared to stand alone and make our sacrifices if we are to achieve equality and then alone we shall be able to achieve and establish " Pakistan " in this land.

BENGAL HORIZON

Now let us view the political position of the day. Let us cast our eyes on the horizon of Bengal. Ladies and gentlemen,

this wretched Constitution, to begin with under which your provincial legislatures function to-day is not of our making. The Constitution in itself is a gross injustice to the thirty-five million of Muslims living in this Province. Of course, it will serve no useful purpose if we blame someone or the other. We have to realise and we have to confess that it is our own fault to a considerable extent that the thirty-five million Muslims in one Muslim state, Bengal, had fallen and fallen to such depths that the voice of Muslim Bengal was dead. In these dreadful conditions, to our shame, the present Constitution was enacted almost *ex parte*, if I may be allowed to say, so far as Muslim India was concerned.

Ladies and gentlemen, the Bengal Legislative Assembly consists of 250 members. Of these you have 122 or 123, including the Special Constituencies. These figures will demonstrate to you that from the very word "go" we are a minority. How can this minority possibly run a Government with a workable and practical majority? A Muslim League Ministry cannot be formed that will be stable. For the same reason a Muslim League Ministry in the Punjab or even in Sind cannot be formed. Those who are fond of arithmetical calculations misrepresent

when they say that we in a Muslim majority province cannot form a Muslim League Ministry.

"LAND OF LOTUS"

At the time of the general elections in the year 1936-37, I came to this land of the Lotus. I toured Dacca, Mymensingh, Comilla and other places and discovered that Muslim Bengal was practically dead. I found men who were out to exploit the people to gain their own ends ; to exploit the people for the purpose of being returned to the legislatures. This was the condition of Bengal. It was the Muslim League which was admittedly till then an academic body that awakened to the realities of the situation and undertook the duty of organising the Muslims and of contesting the elections. A provincial Parliamentary Board was established and Muslim League candidates were put up for election. Remember, Bengal is a continent in herself. With our young and poor organisation we captured no less than 66 seats in the Assembly and became the largest single party that was returned to the House. The Krishak-Praja Party contested the elections as well. Mr. Fazlul Huq was then the champion of the Prajas. His party won some seats. After the elections he conveniently forgot the Prajas and others and became, by joining the Muslim League, the leader of the largest party in

the Assembly. Not only did he throw over the Prajas and the others but he became a member of the Muslim League and preached the creed of the League all over the province, keeping in his pocket at the same time the small Praja group.

FORMER MINISTRY

Ladies and gentlemen, the Ministry that resigned recently was never a Muslim League Ministry; it was only dominantly a Muslim League Ministry. This dominant Muslim League Ministry was in power when we were faced with a new question. You know when the scheme of the expansion of the Viceroy's Executive Council came to be considered, it was known as the eighth of August offer. That offer was considered by the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League of which Mr. Fazlul Huq was a member. It was unanimously resolved that it be not accepted and the offer was not accepted. The offer was also considered by the Council of the Muslim League and the decision of the Working Committee was endorsed by it. Mr. Fazlul Huq was also a member of the Council. The Council's decision was further confirmed by the session of the All-India Muslim League. Without reference to the President of the All-India Muslim League, His Excellency the Viceroy decided to expand his Executive Council and to set up the

so-called Indian National Defence Council. It was nothing but the very offer the Muslim League had rejected. In the terms of the offer the Muslim League would have been entitled on the Executive Council whereas the Governor-General selected and nominated two Muslims on his own. This, you will agree, was adding insult to injury. I ask you if it was possible for any self-respecting organisation or for any individual with a shred of self-respect to agree to accept such an offer ? (No, no, from the audience.) Mr. Fazlul Huq accepted nomination on the National Defence Council (shame, shame) secretly, without reference to the President and without consulting the Working Committee. When the news was published it was found that there were others also who had accepted such appointment but be it said to the honour of the others that both Sir Sikandar Hyat Khan and Sir Mahomad Saadullah bowed to the decision of the Working Committee and resigned from the Defence Council.

MR. HUQ'S PET GAME

The third Muslim League Premier, a Premier that Bengal has produced, I do not know how but it is certainly difficult for any part of the world to produce another like him, wanted time to consider whether he should resign from or remain on the Defence Council. Mr.

> Huq has a pet game that we all know so well. We know when he plays it. When in difficulty Mr. Huq always either wants time or falls ill.

The Working Committee did not refuse him time because the Working Committee is a sensible, responsible and considerate body. He was given ten days to come to a decision. He was informed that if he did not resign within that time disciplinary action would be taken against him. He decided, after resorting to many tricks which are public property, to resign from the Defence Council but with what grace ? You have all read the contents of the letter that was addressed to the Secretary of the All-India Muslim League on the eighth of September, 1941. He made many vile, undignified, false and unjustified accusations against the President, the Working Committee and the Council of the All-India Muslim League. Remember, up till then the Council had not even considered the matter of Mr. Fazlul Huq's action. It was naturally impossible for any self-respecting organisation to permit such libellous and scandalous allegations against its President, the Working Committee and the Council. He went on and on and on trying to tax the patience of every respectable Muslim in the country and ultimately, you may say, surrendered to the demand of the League in substance if not in form. He requested us after his reaffirmation

of loyalty and assurance that he meant no insult or reflection on the President or any member to treat the whole incident as closed. The Working Committee in its magnanimity worthy of a great organisation complied with his request and considered the incident as closed. The file had barely been put away when most startling developments took place in Bengal from which it was as patent as daylight that Mr. Fazlul Huq had made exhaustive and elaborate preparations for many months.

THE 'PROGRESSIVES'

He encouraged the formation of a 'progressive' group of a few Muslim members in the Assembly with himself as leader. Remember, ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Huq was at that time a member of the Muslim League, President of the Provincial League, leader of the Muslim League group in the Assembly, leader of the Coalition Party, member of the Council of the All-India Muslim League and member of the All-India Working Committee. Further he started a daily newspaper in Bengali named the "Nava Joog" which boldly displayed the following words: "Conducted by Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq." The policy of this daily was to abuse the League and all that it stood for.

On the resignation of the last Ministry he went round collecting signatures. I was told that he collected the signatures of 119 members of the Assembly and petitioned the Governor to commission him to form a Ministry as leader of the Progressive Coalition Party, a party of multifarious and conflicting political and economic interests; a party created overnight to destroy Muslim solidarity and to bring confusion in their ranks. I ask you—I have not given you many details—I ask you for your verdict: Is this not the greatest betrayal of not only the Muslim League but the Muslims of Bengal and of the whole of India? Is this not a case of betrayal and treachery to the Coalition Party of which he was leader for over four and a half years? Yes, it is.

GOVERNOR AND CRISIS

Now let us try and understand the stand taken by His Excellency the Governor in this crisis. Can we believe that the Governor was ignorant of the facts that I have placed before you—that he did not know much more than we did of the actual situation of the time? We have no Intelligence Department but the Governor has. The Governor instead of following the course that has been established by convention in the British Parliament, to call the leader of the largest single party, called a man who had been conspiring even as the head of the Government of Bengal—a man

who was canvassing for support with his hat in hand before being commissioned—an act, to my mind, highly improper and derogatory to the honour and prestige of a person who claims to be a leader—a man who had actually petitioned the Governor to commission him to form a Ministry. The encouragement of such a practice is, I say with emphasis, unknown to any system of Parliamentary Government in the world. Signatures are obtained, most of them at least, for the mere asking. Promises have to be made. Is this not encouraging corrupt practice among your legislators? The Coalition Party having been dissolved, His Excellency should have called the leader of the largest single party which was unquestionably the Muslim League Party. Its leader, Sir Nazimuddin, should have been commissioned first. He ought to have been the first man to tell the Governor whether he could or could not form a Ministry. Sir Nazimuddin is a responsible leader with a clean reputation. He has held responsible positions long before this constitution came into operation. Since the inauguration of the present constitution until the day that the Cabinet resigned, he was in charge of the most important portfolio, namely, Home. As I have said, his record is clean, he is a responsible man and has acquitted himself honourably throughout his career. It was for Sir Nazimuddin to decide whether he would accept the commission to form a Ministry or not. If he

made a mistake and said to His Excellency, "yes, I will" and had he failed to do so or was defeated by a vote of no-confidence, it would have been the funeral of the League and not the funeral of the Governor. The Governor did not give him an opportunity to face a funeral and commissioned, as I have said a few minutes ago, a person holding in his hand an application over the signatures of 119 members obtained how, God alone knows. Even this "mighty" man with his mighty majority could not present His Excellency with a complete list of ministers. The names were given in instalments. Although he had sufficient time he did not face the Legislature with a full list of ministers.

PRESENT MINISTRY

Today Bengal has nine ministers. Believe me, I shall not be a bit surprised if this 9 is expanded to reach astronomical figures in the course of time as and when it suits Mr. Fazlul Huq and as and when he finds power slipping through his fingers. On my arrival in Calcutta another really ingenious and ridiculous decision of the Ministry was flashed in the press. It was stated that the Government were appointing 13 Whips (interruptions and shouts, 17, 17). The number was 13 when I reached Calcutta, in Serajganj the number has risen to 17 and God alone knows how many more will be

added to this list later! I put it to the Governor if he can quote any parallel in any legislature in any part of the world where 17 whips are required in a House of 250? I ask the Governor if in his own country in a Parliament of over 600 members, there are 17 whips?

I do not know how many parliamentary secretaries will be appointed. Let us presume that there will be seventeen parliamentary secretaries; then the ministers plus the parliamentary secretaries plus the whips and plus a few more jobs here and there will bring the total to about 50 persons who will be kept together by virtue of direct patronage in the legislature. Therefore out of the 119 Mr. Fazlul Huq has almost 50 who will be there with him just for jobs. This, ladies and gentlemen, is the position of the Ministry that is in power today in the province of Bengal.

LEAGUE PARTY

Now I come to another important matter because it vitally concerns the Muslims of the province. The Muslim League Party is in the opposition and is, therefore, so long as the Constitution is in operation, entitled to approach the Muslims and to appeal to their electorate against the misdeeds of the Government in power. We are not interfer-

ing with the Hindus at all. We are going to our own people and, surely, are we not entitled to do so? We want to *tell* the electorate of the treachery of Mr. Fazlul Huq. We want to tell them and prove to them how Mr. Huq is doing incalculable harm to the Muslims of Bengal and to the Muslims of the whole of India. We want to tell them the truth and Mr. Huq hates this. We want to tell them to call upon the representatives they have sent to the legislature to come to their senses. We want to tell them that these men are causing fatal injury to Muslim interests. Surely we cannot be denied this right. In no country where a constitutional form of government is in operation is this fundamental right denied. Our men are being persecuted and prosecuted. The penal codes of the country are being wrongly utilised. The Defence of India Act, the use of which is permitted only in certain cases and conditions, is being openly abused. I do not know what to say. Is it the Bengal Government or the Bengal misgovernment that is in the saddle? It is the special responsibility of His Excellency the Governor to see that his ministers do not abuse power and the sooner the Governor acts in the matter the better will it be for the peace of the province. As I have said, every effort is being made to prevent us from appealing to the people. Mr. Fazlul Huq realises more than anyone else in the province that almost

99 per cent of the Bengal Muslims are against him and those who have betrayed the Muslim cause. They dare not face openly and frankly and place their case before the people. They want to stop us. We want to tell the truth, they tell the untruth.

> They wish to suppress constitutional agitation by abusing the Defence of India Act and other penal laws. Let me say from this platform and I say with full responsibility and without the least hesitation that if His Excellency does not intervene and if this shameful policy is persisted, there will arise in Bengal such a situation that no power, nor even this wretched Government of Bengal, has ever seen. In Bengal will arise a situation for which there is no parallel in her history during the British Raj. We shall not be suppressed, oppressed or tyrannised by this wretched Ministry, a Ministry that does not represent the Musalmans, a Ministry whose Chief Minister and Muslim Ministers do not enjoy Muslim confidence and have completely forfeited it. I also hope that the eyes of the Viceroy will be opened soon to the new situation that has arisen in Bengal.

CALL FOR PROOF

If any party desires to challenge our assertion that we alone represent the Musalmans of Bengal, let us dissolve the Assembly and go to the polls. Let us go to our people and we shall prove that our claim is not exaggerated but is fully justified. I considered it my bounden duty to leave my many commitments and to come to Bengal to appeal to the Musalmans of the Province. To tell them that it is in their hands to put matters right. With unity the Musalmans can achieve everything they desire. To defeat Mr. Huq and his Ministry will be as easy as falling off a log. I was not sure whether Muslim Bengal had grasped and realised the danger of Mr. Huq's move. That is why I came here and I am happy to find that 99 per cent of the Muslims of Bengal are with the Muslim League and they have understood the game. The Muslims of Calcutta and the Muslims assembled from all over the Province at Serajganj have proved this. I am sure Muslim Bengal will stand firm and united under this great flag of ours and I am sure we shall win.

The Muslim League does not exist for Ministers and Ministries. On the other hand, it is the Ministers and Ministries who can only exist if the Muslim League approves of them. This I want to make

clear. We will not allow anyone to exploit the League for the purpose of becoming a Minister and to utilise the League as the ladder of his personal ambition. I say again, let it be clear here and now and once and for all. Let there be no mistake. We shall not allow men to sneak in and before anyone takes such a step we shall see that he is hurled back.

ALL-INDIA ISSUES

Ladies and gentlemen; I have spoken enough on Bengal for to-day. Let me proceed to other important matters. We have got to consider All-India issues as well and I think I shall be failing in my duty if I do not express to you my views. So far as the Congress is concerned I find that in their language and their tone there is less aggressiveness and less arrogance. In the recent speeches of Mr. Rajagopalacharia I find—I shall not express in my own language but I shall quote his own—it is nice of him to pay me a compliment and I thank him for it. " There has been no settlement between the Government and the people and the principal political organisations over whom such illustrious persons as Mahatma Gandhi and Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah preside. These were not small individuals—one had become as famous as the other and both of them were

tremendously popular in the country. Each had a ' blind following ', let it be so; but it was a true following."

Note the words " true following." Mr. Rajagopalacharia admits that your President has a true following. I am proud of it and I am honoured. He goes on to say:

" Here were, then, two powerful popular organisations of Hindus and Muslims, both at war with the Government and, therefore, with all the operations of the Government. These were facts."

This is the first time that one of the foremost leaders of the Congress has had the courage and frankness to admit that the Congress is a Hindu organisation; and he has uttered the truth. I appeal to Mr. Gandhi to bow before the truth and to declare that the Congress represents the Hindus, and the Muslim League, the Muslims of India. Then and only then there is hope for the two communities to meet on terms of equality and on no other terms can they meet.

PAKISTAN

Now let me proceed to the next point—Pakistan. We have heard many arguments

but what do we find in the latest pronouncement of Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru who always thinks in terms of internationalism? What does he say? He does not repeat the wretched arguments that his colleagues and most of the other Hindu leaders have been repeating "ad nauseam". He does not think in terms of India. For him India does not exist. Let me read to you an extract of his speech as reported in the press on the 2nd of this month:

> He wondered how the Muslim League talk of partitioning India and forming a separate Muslim bloc, when some Islamic countries, which were separate Muslim blocs, had lost their freedom. Those who talked of such partition had closed their eyes and ears to the happenings in the world and had refused to take lessons from the war. He also wondered how a Muslim bloc in India could stand by itself when in the present-day world big nations could not stand alone.

All that I can say to Mr. Nehru is to let us look after ourselves and to let us see whether we can stand by ourselves. May I know from him how the whole of India can stand alone when in the present-day world big nations have not been able to stand alone?

FUTURE CONSTITUTION

Now I shall deal with the controversy that is still going on with regard to the existing and the future constitution of India. The practical issue of immediate importance which is being emphasised is what is to be done immediately. With regard to this I shall briefly tell you how the matters stand today. On the one hand, the British Government are holding fast and tight to the August offer. The declaration of the eighth of August consists of two parts. One part is the declaration of His Majesty's policy with regard to the future constitution of India. The other part is that of the Indianisation of the Viceroy's Executive Council in the interim period by associating the major political parties by getting them to send their representatives to the Executive Council of the Governor-General. Now when it came to a concrete offer, and you know what that offer was, the Congress definitely and clearly declared that they were not prepared to be party to any changes in the Centre or in the Provinces so long as these changes were within the framework of the existing constitution. They rejected the basic principle underlying this proposal of His Majesty's Government.

There are, however, other Hindu organisations, namely, the Hindu Mahasabha, the

Liberal Federation, the Non-Party Conference, now called the Sapru Conference. All these Hindu organisations are one and the same. They masquerade under different names but patrol and reconnoitre on behalf of the Congress.

One brother, the Congress, wants sixteen annas, the other says fifteen annas will do for a start while another says even twelve annas may tempt him and so their game goes on. All have the same objective. If they do not succeed by a frontal attack they bank on success through a backdoor policy under the guise of what they call the setting up of a National Government. They are out to lay as many traps as they can for the destruction of the Pakistan scheme. I declare that they will not succeed. Muslim India is awake and is determined. These Hindu parties are with great zeal encouraging the idea of establishing a National Cabinet, a Cabinet responsible to the Crown. There seems on the face of it very little difference between a Cabinet responsible to the Crown and one responsible to the Legislature. Ladies and gentlemen, this move is a sinister one. In fact, it is the introduction of the thin end of the wedge for how long will the Viceroy be able to overrule the decisions of the majority of his Cabinet supposed to be responsible to the Crown? If he does, then there will arise agitation and the cry that there is oppression

of the majority or high-handedness on the part of the Viceroy will rend the sky. Propaganda will spread like wild-fire that the will of the people—and these people will be the Hindus—is being defied by the autocratic representative of the Crown. The next step will logically be to get the Cabinet responsibility shifted from the Crown to the Legislature, thus securing a definite control over the whole country and thus keeping the Musalmans in a minority position. Who cannot see through this game ? At first glance, it appears to be a harmless and innocent proposition, but in reality it is subtle and all the more treacherous.

So far as the British Government are concerned, up till to-day they stand by the August proposals. Beyond this they will not go. The Congress have rejected these proposals. Our position is that we have accepted them in principle, but when it comes to putting the proposal into practice, they whittle it down to such an extent, that no decent self-respecting organisation can accept it. Our position is, and this we have declared more than once, that we must get a real share not only in the Centre but also in the Provinces.

The Congress to-day unquestionably represents the solid body of Hindu opinion in India and if this body does not accept the basic principle of the August offer, how can

the next step be taken so far as they are concerned? Let them first accept this and prepare the meeting ground and then there will be room and necessity for our sitting together to devise a happy solution. We shall then say what we want and they can say what they want.

In conclusion, I say to the Muslims of Bengal to stand firm, united and consolidated under the banner of the Muslim League. Prepare yourselves Muslims of Bengal and I assure you that victory will be yours. Let us declare that no amount of suppression, oppression, persecution and prosecution will frighten us or will make us deviate from our resolve and our goal. I take this opportunity of giving the authorities and those in power to-day fair warning that if they persist in the prosecution of the policy that they have adopted in the recent months against the Muslim League in Bengal, they will be creating a situation not only in Bengal but also in the rest of India, a situation for which there will be no equal in history. Let them know that we are not merely talking but that we shall resist coercion. I warn them not to force the issue upon us for, if they do, they will rue the day.

APPENDIX VI

BOMBAY RESOLUTION OF LEAGUE

Resolution of the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League passed at Bombay in its meeting held in the month of August 1942.

"The Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League, having given their deep and anxious consideration to the present political development in the country, deplore the decision arrived at by the All-India Congress Committee on August 8, 1942, to launch an "open rebellion" by resorting to mass civil disobedience movement in pursuance of their objective of establishing Congress Hindu domination in India, which has resulted in lawlessness and considerable destruction of life and property.

"It is the considered opinion of the Working Committee that this movement is directed not only to coerce the British Government into handing over power to a Hindu oligarchy and thus disabling themselves from carrying out their moral obligations and pledges given to the Musalmans and other sections of the peoples of India from time to time, but also to force the Musalmans to submit and surrender to the Congress terms and dictation.

" Ever since the beginning of the war and even prior to that the sole objective of the Congress policy has been either to cajole or to coerce the British Government into surrendering power to the Congress—a Hindu body with a microscopic following of other communities—in utter suppression of one hundred million of Musalmans, besides millions of other peoples of this vast sub-continent of India. While claiming the right of self-determination for 'India,' which is a mere Congress euphemism for Hindu majority, it has persistently opposed the right of self-determination for the Muslim nation to decide and determine their own destiny.

" On May 1, 1942, the All-India Congress Committee, by their resolutione, mphatically repudiated the Muslim League demand for the right of self-determination for Muslims and thus closed the door for the settlement of the communal problem, which is a condition precedent to the attainment of the freedom and independence of India. The Congress had also recognised this as an indispensable condition and had there made it a prominent plank in the Congress programme for over twenty years, but by their recent decisions have suddenly thrown it overboard and in its stead substituted the fantastic theory that the solution of the Hindu-Muslim problem can only follow the withdrawal of British power from India.

"The negotiations of Sir Stafford Cripps with the Congress broke down not on the issue of Independence, but because of the refusal of the British Government to hand over the Muslims and the minorities to the tender mercies of the Congress. Any acquiescence in this on the part of the British would have been strenuously resisted by the ministries, and particularly by the Muslim nation, with memories of tyranny in the Congress-governed Provinces still fresh and vivid in their minds.

"Baulked in their effort to cajole Sir Stafford Cripps to agree to the transfer of power to the Congress caucus, they decided upon a slogan—'Quit India'—accompanied with the threat of mass civil disobedience. This slogan is a mere camouflage, and what is really aimed at is the supreme control of the Government of the country by the Congress.

"The Musalmans are not a whit less insistent on freedom for the country and the achievement of independence of the people of India, which is the creed of the All-India Muslim League. They are, however, firmly convinced that the constituent elements in the life of the country are out for the establishment of Hindu *Raj* and to deal a death blow to the Muslim goal of Pakistan.

"The Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League note with dissatisfaction

the attitude and policy of the British Government towards the national aspirations of one hundred million of Muslims of India.

" While the Congress aims at ignoring and suppressing the Muslim demand, the Working Committee regret that the British Government have been unresponsive to the Muslim League's offer of co-operation. The appeasement of the Congress has been the central pivot of the Government policy, with barren and sterile results and has now culminated in the open defiance of law and order.

" Since the commencement of hostilities the Muslim League has been ready and willing, either singly or in co-operation with other parties, to shoulder the responsibility for running the administration and mobilising the resources of the country for the war efforts for the defence of India, if a real share in the power and authority of the Government at the Centre and in the Provinces was conceded within the frame-work of the present Constitution, and in pursuance of this policy, the Muslim League accepted the underlying principles of the August offer of 1940 of the British Government.

" But the Government in implementing the offer, nullified the essential principles of it and so made it impossible for the Muslim League to co-operate with the Government on

honourable terms. In spite of the fact that the British Government had spurned the offer of co-operation of the Muslim League still, under the imminent shadow of the Japanese menace, the Muslim League once again reiterated their offer by their resolution of December 27, 1941 in the following words:

'In view of the fact that the entry of Japan in the war on the side of the Axis Powers has brought the danger much closer to India and has forced into greater prominence the question of the defence of India, the Working Committee consider it necessary to reiterate that the Muslim League from the very beginning has expressed its willingness to share the responsibility of the defence of the country, is evident from the stand taken by the President of the All-India Muslim League as far back as November 1939...The Working Committee once more declare that they are ready and willing as before to shoulder the burden of the defence of the country, singly or in co-operation with other parties on the basis that a real share and responsibility is given in the authority of the Government at the Centre and the Provinces within the framework of the present Constitution, but without prejudice to the major political issues involved in the framing of the future Constitution.'

"But the British Government completely ignored the offer of the Muslim League.

" While the proposals of Sir Stafford Cripps virtually conceded the Congress demands on the right of secession from the British Commonwealth of Nations and forming of a Constituent Assembly with a preponderant Hindu majority for the framing of the post-war constitution, they merely recognised the possibility of establishing Pakistan, supposed to be implicit in the non-accession scheme.

" The Working Committee are definitely of the opinion that if the Muslim masses are to be roused to intensify the war effort with all the sacrifices that are involved in it, it is only possible, provided they are assured that it would lead to the realisation of the inspiring goal of Pakistan. The Muslim League, therefore, calls upon the British Government to come forward without any further delay with an unequivocal declaration guaranteeing to the Musalmans the right of self-determination and to pledge themselves that they would abide by the verdict of the plebiscite of Musalmans and give effect to the Pakistan scheme in consonance with the basic principles laid down by the Lahore resolution of the All-India Muslim League passed in March 1940.

" Having regard to the oft-repeated declaration of the United Nations to secure and guarantee the freedom and independence of the smaller nations of the world the Working

Committee invite the immediate attention of the United Nations to the demand of one hundred millions of Muslims of India to establish Sovereign States in the zones which are their homelands and where they are in a majority.

"The Working Committee are fully convinced that Pakistan is the only solution of India's constitutional problem and it is in complete consonance with justice and fairplay to the two great nations—Muslims and Hindus—inhabiting this vast sub-continent; whereas if the Congress demand is accepted it would bring the hundred millions of Musalmans under the yoke of Hindu Raj which must inevitably result either in anarchy and chaos or complete strangulation and annihilation of Muslim India and all that Islam stands for.

"The Muslim League, as it has been repeatedly made clear, stands not only for Pakistan and the freedom of Muslims, but also for the freedom and independence of Hindustan and the Hindus.

"The Muslim League has been and is ready and willing to consider any proposal and negotiate with any party on a footing of equality for the setting up of a provisional Government of India, in order to mobilise the resources of the country for the purpose of the defence of India and the successful pro-

secution of the war, provided the demands of Muslim India, as indicated above, are conceded unequivocally.

"In these circumstances, the Working Committee of the All-India Muslim League, after anxious and careful consideration, call upon the Musalmans to abstain from any participation in the movement initiated by the Congress and to continue to pursue their normal peaceful life.

"The Working Committee hope that no attempt shall be made from any quarter to intimidate, coerce, molest or interfere in any manner with the normal life of the Muslims; otherwise the Muslims would be compelled and justified to offer resistance and adopt all such measures as may be necessary for the protection of their life, honour and property."

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